The Immaculate Conception

DOGMA
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The Dogma
of the
Immaculate Conception

Historical Development
and
Dogmatic Fulfilment

A Guide for Theologian and Layman from
Approved Catholic Sources

By

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Washington, D. C.
1929

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To

Mary Immaculate

Ever Virgin Mother of God

Patroness of Our Country

and of

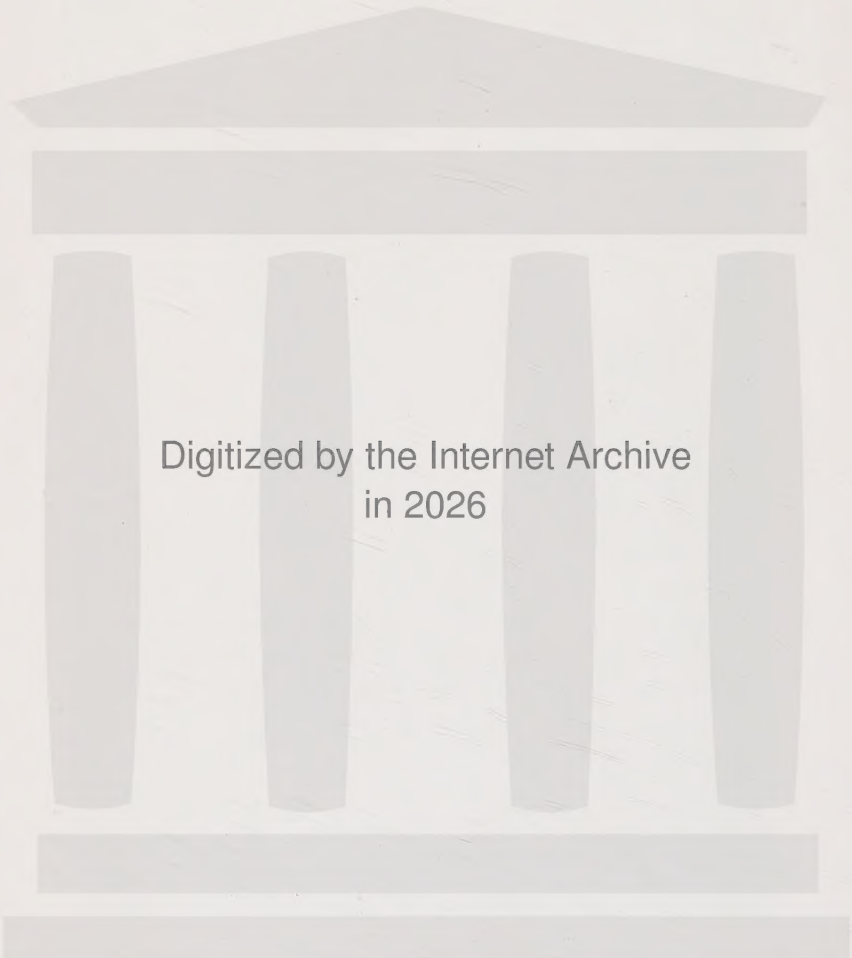
Our National Shrine

OUR IMMACULATE QUEEN

Many and beauteous are the titles sweet
Which loving clients, kneeling at thy feet
(Swelling the chant of blissful choirs above
Enraptur'd with thy grandeur and thy fame),
In tender gratitude, in faith and love
Have coupled, Blessed Lady, with thy name!
But, first and foremost 'mid those titles blest,
One appellation which outshines the rest:
The most resplendent and unrivall'd gem
That sparkles in our Mother's diadem,
Is this—(O purer flesh could never win!)
Mary, conceived without the stain of sin!
Soon 'neath that title may all states combine
To build to Heaven's Queen our nation's shrine!

—Eleanor C. Donnelly.

Murillo—Immaculate Conception, Prado, Madrid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Imprimatur

† Michael J. Curley

Archbishop of Baltimore

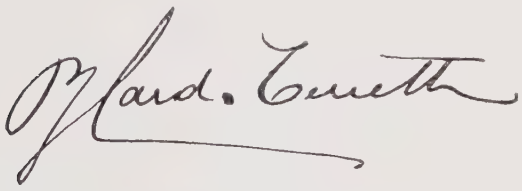
Chancellor of Catholic University of America

February 2, 1929.

Washington, D. C.,
January 6, 1929.

It is with great pleasure I welcome this work on the Immaculate Conception.

The Diamond Jubilee of the Declaration of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception is a memorable event and the re-study of its history and documentary evidence as found in this volume of deep theological research may be studied with great profit.



FOREWORD

Founders of Chairs in modern universities usually have in view a permanent course of lectures to be delivered in hall or class room to a select number of students. Fortunately the motive which inspired the founder of the Chair of the Immaculate Conception in the Catholic University of America was not merely to provide for lectures on this subject, but to bring about the exaltation of our Blessed Lady. Scarcely could he have foreseen how the fruit of his endowment would far transcend the limits of the lecture room and reach from end to end, mightily in every sphere of human activity, in science, sacred and profane, in history, theology, philosophy, in liturgy, morals and sociology, in art, architecture, sculpture, painting, music, literature, eloquence, poetry and song. In all these ways has belief in the Immaculate Conception ever expressed itself.

When, three-quarters of a century ago, there was question of defining and declaring this belief solemnly as an article of faith, years of labor were devoted to studying the history of the tradition from the time of the Apostles in testimonies written and unwritten, in monuments of temple, shrine and sacred image, in mosaic, icon and canvass, in palimsest and manuscript. Whenever the humanity of Christ was in dispute, there was the fair form of the Mother. Whenever grace was under consideration, here was its perfection. Redemption was better appreciated when this singular merit of it was in evidence. The more intimate study of human nature itself, its spiritual and material element, its mental qualities and condition, its instincts, propensities, relation of reason to appetite, of will to judgment, all that is most important in a sound psychology, is illumined by the contemplation of this exalted privilege of Mary. If we pass to the science of ethnology, the origin of the human race, its derivation from a common ancestor, its unity in the bond of common parentage, this privilege of our Blessed Mother brings us back to the first Eve, consort of Adam, in whom all have sinned, and on to the second Eve, Mother of Him who has redeemed us from this primal sin. And so of that other science, sociology, of the relation of man to man, which is futile without the

principle of the brotherhood of mankind and of our adoption as sons of God with, as Cardinal Newman so touchingly said, Christ for our elder brother and Mary as our nursing mother. Even geography has its provinces, towns and rivers, the great Mississippi, for instance, named for this prerogative of the Virgin Mother of God. Who that knows its meaning will doubt it was providential to have this extraordinary prerogative of our Lady impressed upon us at a time when perverse notions of the relations of manhood and womanhood were to be emphasized as never before?

Like all men of generous impulses, the founder builded better than he knew. Little could he imagine that the occupant of the Chair would be inspired to reproduce in the form of a temple what he had taught his students to understand as a doctrine which only the Catholic minded really appreciate. The Mary Books and *this collection of classical documents concerning the high prerogative of the Mother of Christ are the best evidence that university studies are not all sterile speculation and unproductive research.* No declaration of the Holy See has ever occasioned such study of theology as the promulgation of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. For a time after December 8, 1854, there were protestations by a few Catholics and bitter accusations of Mariolatry—idolatry of Mary—by some ill-informed and impetuous Protestants. Now all that is hushed. Nay more, when a few years ago some Modernists attacked belief in the Virgin birth of Christ no group of Christians resented this more than the strong conservative element in the Protestant Churches. Praise of Mary is no longer an exceptional thing among those who once misunderstood our own exaltation of her name. This collection of classical documents concerning her Immaculate Conception is a worthy tribute to her as we open the diamond jubilee year of the declaration of this dogma.

John J. Wynne S.J.

INTRODUCTION

December 8, 1929, will be the seventy-fifth or diamond jubilee year of the declaration of the Immaculate Conception as a dogma of the Catholic Church. Among Catholics, the occasion will undoubtedly give rise to new and more intensive study of the dogma and it is reasonable to believe that even among those outside the Fold, interest in this prerogative of Mary will be aroused together with a desire to investigate its meaning. Above all, the laity, Brothers and Sisters of the various Congregations and the clergy, both religious and secular, will welcome anything that will add to the glory of Mary, especially now when the universal mediation of the Blessed Virgin is being studied so seriously with the purpose of presenting it for a dogmatic definition.

We of the United States of America will welcome this jubilee and take our place by right in the procession which will honor Mary Immaculate. It is with this honor in view that the present book is brought forth—a compilation—to give the words of the declaration of the dogma; to tell the story of eyewitnesses of events in St. Peter's Rome, on that memorable December 8, 1854; to enable scholars to read the interpretation of the dogma according to the theologians; to see the preparations of the dogma: the position of St. Thomas Aquinas and his followers; the work of the eminent Franciscan, Duns Scotus; St. Alphonsus Liguori, and others; to welcome the words of Cardinal Lambruschini in justification of the definition, and to hear the call of the Spanish church, the one consistent and true champion of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. These are a few of the items recorded in this work.

Would that these few extracts might prove an incentive to the fuller study of the works of Rivarola, Perrone, Passaglia, Gravois, Malou and those other eminent writers on the Immaculate Conception, whose names have become

household words and whose love for Mary Immaculate has been handed down to posterity. Enough has been given in English from among the best authors to make the doctrine and its history intelligible to the person who knows only the English language; to this, however, have been added the *ipsissima verba* of famous authors in other languages, in the hope that they will be an advantage to theologians, writers and preachers.

The compilation of these documents is the result of more than ten years' study of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception; the constant use of such works as Passaglia, Perrone, Lambruschini, Spada, Rivarola; Newman's *Answer to Pusey;* the wonderful work of Archbishop Ullathorne, etc., and especially the study of the *Pareri,* the responses to Pius IX's encyclical by all the cardinals, archbishops, bishops and heads of Religious Orders as to their own views and that of their people on the subject of the Immaculate Conception as a dogma of the Catholic Faith.

In the preparation of this work, credit must be given to those authors whom we have quoted, all of whom are acknowledged in the work itself. Particular thanks are due to the Rt. Rev. Bishop Shahan, to Rev. Dr. Francis Lucidi and Rev. Dr. James M. Campbell, who so kindly undertook to read the proofs. In addition to these should be mentioned the Rev. Nicholas M. Walsh, O. P., of the Immaculate Conception College, Washington, D. C., and his confrères, Rev. Matthew M. Hanley, O.P., and Rev. Timothy M. Sparks, O.P., also, Rev. Augustus Leal, C.M.F., Mr. J. R. Oberwinder, and other Mariana students for able assistance.

To the generous and far-seeing Mr. George Logan Duval, who in 1918—just ten years ago—founded the Chair of the Immaculate Conception at the Catholic University of America, is due in great part this volume, the outcome of his sterling devotion to the Immaculate Conception and his interest in the literature of this dogma.

Bernard A. McKenna.

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PART I

PIUS IX

Taken from picture in the Mariana Library, National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

CHAPTER I

"INEFFABILIS DEUS"

APOSTOLIC LETTER

OF

OUR MOST HOLY LORD PIUS IX,

BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE POPE

CONCERNING THE DOGMATIC DEFINITION OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE VIRGIN MOTHER OF GOD

PIUS, BISHOP, SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD
FOR THE PERPETUAL REMEMBRANCE OF THE THING

THE Ineffable God, whose ways are mercy and truth, whose will is omnipotence, and whose wisdom reaches powerfully from end to end, and disposes all things sweetly, when he foresaw from all eternity the most sorrowful ruin of the entire human race to follow from the transgression of Adam, and in a mystery hidden from ages determined to complete, through the incarnation of the Word, in a more hidden sacrament, the first work of His goodness, so that man, led into sin by the craft of diabolical iniquity, should not perish contrary to His merciful design, and that what was about to befall in the first Adam should be restored more happily in the second; from the beginning and before ages, chose and ordained a mother for His only-begotten Son, of whom, made flesh, He should be born in the blessed plenitude of time, and followed her with so great love before all creatures that in her alone He pleased Himself with a most benign complacency. Wherefore, far before all the angelic spirits and all the Saints, He so wonderfully

endowed her with the abundance of all heavenly gifts, drawn from the treasure of divinity, that she might be ever free from every stain of sin, and, all fair and perfect, should bear before her that plentitude of innocence and holiness than which, under God, none greater is understood, and which, except God, no one can reach, even in thought. And, indeed, it was most becoming that she should shine always adorned with the splendor of the most perfect holiness, and, free even from the stain of original sin, she should have the most complete triumph over the ancient serpent—that Mother so venerable, to whom God the Father willed to give his only Son, begotten of His heart, equal to Himself, and whom He loves as Himself; and to give Him in such a manner that He is by nature one and the same common Son of God the Father and of the Virgin, and whom the Son chose substantially to be His Mother, and of whom the Holy Ghost willed that, by His operation, He, from whom He Himself proceeds, should be conceived and born.

Which original innocence of the august Virgin agreeing completely with her admirable holiness, and with the most excellent dignity of the Mother of God, the Catholic Church, which, ever taught by the Holy Spirit, is the pillar and ground of truth, as possessing a doctrine divinely received, and comprehended in the deposit of heavenly revelation, has never ceased to lay down, to cherish, and to illustrate continually by numerous proofs, and daily more and more by conspicuous facts. For this doctrine, flourishing from the most ancient times, and implanted in the minds of the faithful, and by the care and zeal of the Holy Pontiffs wonderfully propagated, the Church herself has most clearly pointed out when she did not hesitate to propose the conception of the same Virgin for the public devotion and veneration of the Faithful. By which illustrious act she pointed out the conception of the Virgin as singular, won-

derful, and very different from the origin of the rest of mankind, and to be venerated as entirely holy, since the Church celebrates by festivals only that which is holy. And, therefore, the very words in which the Sacred Scriptures speak of uncreated Wisdom and represent His eternal origin, she has been accustomed to use not only in the offices of the Church, but also in the holy liturgy, and to transfer to the origin of that Virgin, which was preordained by one and the same decree with the incarnation of Divine Wisdom.

But though all those things everywhere justly received amongst the faithful show with what zeal the Roman Church, the mother and mistress of all Churches, has supported the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, yet the illustrious acts of this Church are evidently worthy that they should be reviewed in detail; since so great is the dignity and authority of the same Church, so much is due to her who is the centre of Catholic truth and unity, in whom alone religion has been inviolably guarded, and from whom it is right that all the Churches should receive the tradition of faith. Thus the same Roman Church had nothing more at heart than to assert, to protect, to promote, and to vindicate in the most eloquent manner the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, its devotion and doctrine, which fact is attested and proclaimed by so many illustrious acts of the Roman Pontiffs, Our predecessors, to whom, in the person of the Prince of the Apostles, was divinely committed by Christ our Lord the supreme care and power of feeding lambs and sheep, of confirming the brethren, and of ruling and governing the universal Church.

Indeed, Our predecessors have ever gloried in instituting in the Roman Church by their own Apostolic authority the Feast of the Conception, and to augment, ennoble, and promote with all their power the devotion thus instituted, by a proper Office and a proper Mass, by which the prerogative

of immunity from hereditary stain was most manifestly asserted; to increase it either by indulgences granted, or by leave given to states, provinces, and kingdoms, that they might choose as their patron the Mother of God, under the title of the Immaculate Conception, or by approved sodalities, congregations, and religious families instituted to the honor of the Immaculate Conception; or by praises given to the piety of those who have erected monasteries, hospitals, or churches, under the title of the Immaculate Conception, or who have bound themselves by a religious vow to defend strenuously the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God. Above all, they were happy to ordain that the Feast of the Conception should be celebrated through the whole Church as that of the Nativity; and, in fine, that it should be celebrated with an Octave in the universal Church as it was placed in the rank of the festivals which are commanded to be kept holy; also, that a Pontifical service in our Patriarchal Liberian Basilica should be performed yearly on the day sacred to the Conception of the Virgin; and desiring to cherish daily more and more in the minds of the Faithful this doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God, and to excite their piety in worshipping and venerating the Virgin conceived without original sin, they have rejoiced most freely to give leave that in the Litany of Loretto, and in the Preface of the Mass itself, the Immaculate Conception of the same Virgin should be proclaimed, and that thus the law of faith should be established by the very law of supplication. We ourselves, treading in the footsteps of so many predecessors, have not only received and approved what had been most wisely and piously established and appointed by them, but also mindful of the institution of Sixtus IV, We have appointed by our authority a proper Office for the Immaculate Conception,

and with a most joyful mind have granted the use of it to the universal Church.

But since those things which pertain to worship are evidently bound by an intimate cord to its object, and cannot remain fixed and determined, if it be doubtful, and placed in uncertainty, therefore Our predecessors, the Roman Pontiffs, increasing with all their care the devotion of the Conception, studied most especially to declare and inculcate its object and doctrine; for they taught clearly and openly that the festival was celebrated for the Conception of the Virgin, and they proscribed as false and most foreign to the intention of the Church the opinion of those who considered and affirmed that it was not the Conception itself, but the sanctification, to which devotion was paid by the Church. Nor did they think of treating more indulgently those who, in order to weaken the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, drawing a distinction between the first and second instant and moment of the Conception, asserted that the Conception was indeed celebrated, but not for the first instant and moment; for Our predecessors themselves thought it their duty to protect and defend with all zeal both the feast of the Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin, and the Conception from the first instant as the true object of devotion. Hence the words, evidently decretive, in which Alexander VII, declared the true intention of the Church, saying: "Certainly, it is the ancient piety of the faithful of Christ towards His Most Blessed Mother the Virgin Mary, believing that her soul, in the first instant of creation, and of infusion into the body, was by a special grace and privilege of God, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ her Son the Redeemer of mankind, preserved free from the stain of original sin, and in this sense they keep and celebrate with solemn rites the Festival of her Conception."

And to the same, Our predecessors, this also was most

especially a duty to preserve from contention the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God, guarded and protected with all care and zeal. For not only have they never suffered that this doctrine should ever be censured or traduced in any way, or by any one, but they have gone much farther, and in clear declarations on repeated occasions they have proclaimed that the doctrine in which we confess the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin is, and by its own merit, held evidently consistent with Ecclesiastical worship, that it is ancient and nearly universal, and of the same sort as that which the Roman Church has undertaken to cherish and protect, and, above all, worthy to be placed in its sacred liturgy and its solemn prayers. Nor content with this, in order that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin should remain inviolate, they have most severely prohibited the opinion adverse to this doctrine to be defended either in public or in private, and they have wished to crush it, as it were, by repeated blows. To which reiterated and most clear declarations, lest they might appear empty, they added a sanction; all which things Our illustrious predecessor, Alexander VII, embraced in these words:—

"Considering that the Holy Roman Church solemnly celebrates the festival of the Conception of the Immaculate and Ever-Blessed Virgin, and has appointed for this a special and proper office according to the pious, devout, and laudable institution which emanated from Our predecessor, Sixtus IV, and wishing, after the example of the Roman Pontiffs, Our predecessors, to favor this laudable piety, devotion, and festival, and the reverence shown towards it, never changed in the Roman Church since the institution of the worship itself; also in order to protect the piety and devotion of venerating and celebrating the Most Blessed Virgin, preserved from original sin by the preventing grace of the Holy Ghost, and desiring to pre-

serve in the flock of Christ unity of spirit in the bond of peace, removing offences, and brawls, and scandals; at the instance and prayers of the said Bishops, with the Chapters of their churches, and of King Philip and his kingdoms, We renew the constitutions and decrees issued by the Roman Pontiffs, Our predecessors, and especially by Sixtus IV, Paul V, and Gregory XV, in favor of asserting the opinion that the soul of the Blessed Virgin, in its creation and infusion into the body, was endowed with the grace of the Holy Ghost, and preserved from original sin; likewise, also, in favor of the festival of the same Virgin Mother of God, celebrated according to that pious belief which is recited above, and We command that it shall be observed under the censures and punishments contained in the same constitutions.

"And against all and each of those who try to interpret the aforesaid constitutions or decrees so that they may frustrate the favor shown through these to the said belief and to the festival or worship celebrated according to it, or who try to call into dispute the same belief, festival, or worship, or against these in any manner, either directly or indirectly, and on any pretext, even that of examining the grounds of defining it, or of explaining or interpreting the Sacred Scriptures or the Holy Fathers or Doctors; in fine, who should dare under any pretext or on any occasion whatsoever, to say either in writing or in speech, to preach, to treat, to dispute, by determining or asserting anything against these, or by bringing arguments against them and leaving these arguments unanswered, or by expressing dissent in any other possible manner; besides the punishments and censures contained in the constitutions of Sixtus IV, to which we desire to add, and by these presents do add, those: We will that they should be deprived *ipso facto*, and without other declaration of the

faculty of preaching, of reading in public, or of teaching and interpreting, and also of their voice, whether active or passive, in elections; from which censures they cannot be absolved, nor obtain dispensation, unless from Us, or Our successors, the Roman Pontiffs; likewise, We wish to subject, and We hereby do subject, the same persons to other penalties to be inflicted at Our will, and at that of the same Roman Pontiffs, Our successors, renewing the constitutions or decrees of Paul IV, and Gregory XV, above referred to.

"And We prohibit, under the penalties and censures contained in the Index of Prohibited Books, and We will and declare that they should be esteemed prohibited *ipso facto,* an without other declaration, books in which the aforesaid belief and the festival or devotion celebrated according to it is recalled into dispute, or in which anything whatever is written or read against these, or lectures, sermons, treatises, and disputations against the same, published after the decree of Paul V above mentioned, or to be published at any future time."

All are aware with how much zeal this doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God has been handed down, asserted and propagated by the most distinguished religious Orders, the most celebrated theological academies, and the most eminent doctors of the science of Divinity. All know likewise how anxious have been the Bishops openly and publicly to profess, even in the ecclesiastical assemblies themselves, that the Most Holy Mother of God, the Virgin Mary, by virtue of the merits of Christ Our Lord, the Saviour of mankind, never lay under original sin, but was preserved free from the original stain, and thus was redeemed in a more sublime manner. To which, lastly, is added this fact, most grave and, in an especial manner, most important of all, that the Council of Trent itself, when it promulgated the dogmatic decree concerning original sin,

in which, according to the testimonies of the Sacred Scriptures, of the Holy Fathers, and of the most approved councils, it determined and defined that all mankind are born under original sin; solemnly declared, however, that it was not its intention to include in the decree itself, and in the amplitude of its definition, the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary, Mother of God. Indeed, by this declaration, the Tridentine Fathers have asserted, according to the times and the circumstances of affairs, that the Blessed Virgin Mary was free from the original stain, and thus clearly signified that nothing could be justly adduced from the sacred writings, nor from the authority of the Fathers, which would in any way gainsay so great a prerogative of the Virgin.

And, in real truth, illustrious monuments of a venerated antiquity of the Eastern and of the Western Church most powerfully testify that this doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin, every day more and more so splendidly explained and confirmed by the highest authority, teaching, zeal, science, and wisdom of the Church, and so wonderfully propagated amongst all the nations and peoples of the Catholic world, always existed in the Church as received by Our ancestors, and stamped with the character of a divine revelation. For the Church of Christ, careful guardian and defender of the dogmas deposited with her, changes nothing in them, diminishes nothing, adds nothing but, with all industry, by faithfully and wisely treating ancient things, if they are handed down from antiquity, so studies to eleminate, to clear them up, that these ancient dogmas of heavenly faith may receive evidence, light, distinction, but still may retain their fullness, integrity, propriety, and may increase only in their own kind—that is, in the same dogma, the same sense, and the same belief.

The Fathers and writers of the Church, taught by the

heavenly writings, had nothing more at heart, in the books written to explain the Scriptures, to vindicate the dogmas, and to instruct the faithful, than emulously to declare and exhibit in many and wonderful ways the Virgin's most high sanctity, dignity, and freedom from all stain of original sin, and her renowned victory over the most foul enemy of the human race. Wherefore, repeating the words in which, at the beginning of the world, the Almighty, announcing the remedies of his mercy, prepared for regenerating mankind, crushed the audacity of the lying Serpent, and wonderfully raised up the hope of our race, saying: "I will place enmity between thee and the woman, thy seed and hers," they taught that in this divine oracle was clearly and openly pointed out the merciful Redeemer of the human race—the only-begotten Son of God, Christ Jesus, and that his Most Blessed Mother, the Virgin Mary, was designated, and at the same time that the enmity of both against the Serpent was signally expressed. Wherefore, as Christ, the mediator of God and men, having assumed human nature, blotting out the handwriting of the decree which stood against us fastened it triumphantly to the Cross, so the Most Holy Virgin, bound by a most close and indissoluble chain with Him, exercising with Him and through Him eternal enmity against the malignant Serpent, and triumphing most amply over the same, has crushed his head with her immaculate foot.

This illustrious and singular triumph of the Virgin, and her most exalted innocence, purity, and holiness, her freedom from all stain of sin, and ineffeble abundance and greatness of all heavenly graces, virtues, and privileges, the same Fathers beheld in that ark of Noah, which, divinely appointed, escaped safe and sound from the common shipwreck of the whole world; also in that ladder which Jacob beheld reaching from earth to heaven, by whose steps the

Angels of God ascended and descended, on whose top leaned God himself; also in that bush which, in the holy place, Moses beheld blaze on every side, and amidst the crackling flames neither to be consumed nor to suffer the least injury, but to grow green and to blossom fairly; also in that impregnable tower in front of the enemy, on which are hung a thousand bucklers and all the armor of the brave; also in that garden fenced round about, which cannot be violated nor corrupted by any schemes of fraud; also in that brilliant city of God, whose foundations are in the holy mounts; also in that most august temple of God, which, shining with divine splendor, is filled with the glory of God; likewise in many other things of this kind which the Fathers have handed down, that the exalted dignity of the Mother of God and her spotless innocence, and her holiness, obnoxious to no blemish, have been signally preannounced.

To describe the same totality, as it were, of divine gifts, and the original integrity of the Virgin of whom Jesus was born, the same Fathers, using the eloquence of the Prophets, celebrate the august Virgin as the spotless dove, the holy Jerusalem, the exalted throne of God, the ark and house of sanctification, which Eternal Wisdom built for itself; and as that Queen who, abounding in delights and leaning on her beloved, came forth entirely perfect from the mouth of the Most High, fair and most dear to God, and never stained with the least spot. But when the same Fathers and the writers of the Church revolved in their hearts and minds that the Most Blessed Virgin, in the name and by the order of God himself, was proclaimed full of grace by the Angel Gabriel, when announcing her most sublime dignity of the Mother of God, they taught that, by this singular and solemn salutation, never heard on any other occasion, is shown that the Mother of God is the seat of all divine graces, and adorned with all the gifts of the Holy Ghost—yea, the

infinite storehouse and inexhaustible abyss of the same gifts; so that, never subjected to malediction, and alone with her Son partaker of perpetual benediction, she deserved to hear from Elizabeth, inspired by the Holy Ghost: "Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb."

Hence it is the clear and unanimous opinion of the same that the most glorious Virgin, from whom He who is powerful has done great things, has shone with such a brilliancy of all heavenly gifts, such fullness of grace, and such innocence, that she has been an ineffable miracle of the Almighty, yea, the crown of all miracles, and worthy Mother of God; that she approaches as nearly to God as created nature can do, and is more exalted than all human and angelic encomiums.

And, therefore, to vindicate the original innocence and justice of the Mother of God, they not only compared her to Eve, as yet virgin, as yet innocent, as yet incorrupted, and not yet deceived by the most deadly snares of the most treacherous serpent, but they have preferred her with a wonderful variety of thought and expression. For Eve, miserably obeying the serpent, fell from original innocence, and became his slave, but the Most Blessed Virgin, ever increasing her original gift, not only never lent an ear to the serpent, but by a virtue divinely received utterly broke his power.

Wherefore, they have never ceased to call the Mother of God the lily amongst the thorns, earth entirely untouched, virgin, undefiled, immaculate, ever blessed, and free from all contagion of sin, from which was formed the new Adam, a reproachless, most sweet paradise of innocence, immortality, and delights, planted by God himself, and fenced from all snares of the malignant serpent, incorruptible branch that the worm of sin has never injured; fountain ever clear, and marked by the virtue of the Holy Ghost, a most divine temple, or treasure of immortality, or the sole

and only daughter not of death but of life, the seed not of enmity but of grace, which by the singular providence of God has always flourished, springing from a corrupt and imperfect root, contrary to the settled and common laws. But if these encomiums, though most splendid, were not sufficient, they proclaimed in proper and defined opinions that when sin was to be treated of, no question should be entertained concerning the Holy Virgin Mary, to whom an abundance of grace was given, to conquer sin completely. They also declared that the most glorious Virgin was the reparatrix of her parents, the vivifier of posterity, chosen from the ages, prepared for himself by the Most High, predicted by God when he said to the serpent, "I will place enmity between thee and the woman," who undoubtedly has crushed the poisonous head of the same serpent; and therefore they affirm that the same Blessed Virgin was through grace perfectly free from every stain of sin, and from all contagion of body and soul and mind, and always conversant with God, and united with him in an eternal covenant, never was in darkness but always in light, and therefore was plainly a fit habitation for Christ, not on account of her bodily state, but on account of her original grace.

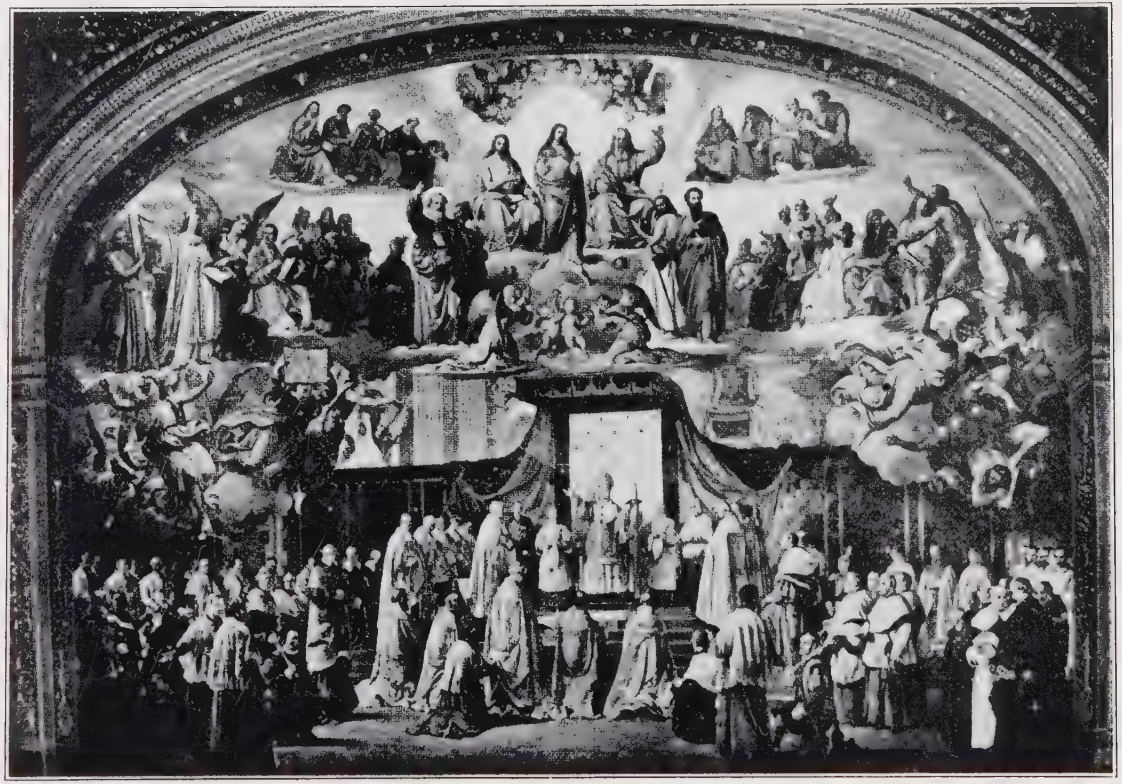
To these things are added the noble words in which, speaking of the Conception of the Virgin, they have testified that nature yielded to grace and stood trembling, not being able to proceed further; for it was to be that the Virgin Mother of God should not be conceived by Anna before grace should bear fruit. For she ought thus to be conceived as the first born, from whom should be conceived the first born of every creature. They have testified that the flesh of the Virgin, taken from Adam, did not admit the stains of Adam, and on this account that the Most Blessed Virgin was the tabernacle created by God himself, formed by the Holy Spirit, truly enriched with purple which that new

Beseleel made, adorned and woven with gold; and that this same Virgin is, and deservedly is celebrated as she who was the first and the peculiar work of God, escaped from the fiery weapons of evil, and fair by nature, and entirely free from all stain, came into the world all shining like the morn in her Immaculate Conception; nor, truly, was it right that this vessel of election should be assailed by common injuries, since, differing very much from others, she had community with them only in their nature, not in their fault.

Moreover, it was right that, as the Only Begotten had a Father in heaven, whom the Seraphim proclaimed thrice holy, so He should have a Mother on the earth, who should never want the splendor of holiness. And this doctrine, indeed, so filled the minds and souls of our forefathers that a marvellous and singular form of speech prevailed with them, in which they very frequently called the Mother of God immaculate and entirely immaculate, innocent and most innocent, spotless, holy, and most distant from every stain of sin, all pure, all perfect, the type and model of purity and innocence, more beautiful than beauty, more gracious than grace, more holy than holiness, and alone holy, and most pure in soul and body, who has surpassed all perfectitude and all virginity, and has become the dwelling-place of all the graces of the Most Holy Spirit, and who, God alone excepted, is superior to all, and by nature fairer, more beautiful, and more holy than the cherubim and seraphim; she whom all the tongues of heaven and earth do not suffice to extol. No one is ignorant that these forms of speech have passed, as it were, spontaneously into the monuments of the most holy liturgy, and the Offices of the Church, and that they occur often in them and abound amply; and that the Mother of God is invoked and named in them as a spotless dove of beauty, as a rose ever blooming and perfectly pure, and ever spotless and ever blessed, and is celebrated as inno-

cence which was never wounded, and a second Eve who brought forth Emmanuel.

It is no wonder, then, if the Pastors of the Church and the faithful people have daily more and more gloried to profess with so much piety and fervor this doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mother of God, pointed out in the Sacred Scriptures, according to the judgment of the Fathers, handed down in so many mighty testimonies of the same, expressed and celebrated in so many illustrious monuments of a revered antiquity, and proposed, and with great piety confirmed by the greatest and highest judgment of the Church; so that nothing would be more dear, more pleasing to the same than everywhere to worship, venerate, invoke, and proclaim the Virgin Mother of God conceived without original stain. Wherefore, from the ancient times the Princes of the Church, Ecclesiastics, and even emperors and kings themselves, have earnestly entreated of this Apostolic See that the Immaculate Conception of the Most Holy Mother of God should be defined as a dogma of Catholic faith. Which entreaties were renewed also in these Our times, and especially were addressed to Gregory XVI, Our predecessor of happy memory, and to Ourselves, not only by Bishops, but by the secular clergy, religious Orders, by the greatest princes, and by the faithful people.



Copy of the original painting in the Hall of the Immaculate Conception in the Vatican, Rome

CONTINUATION OF CHAPTER I

THE DOGMA OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Therefore, with singular joy of mind, well knowing all these things, and seriously considering them, scarcely had We, though unworthy, been raised by a mysterious dispensation of Divine Providence to the exalted Chair of Peter, and undertaken the government of the whole Church, than, following the veneration, the piety, and love We had entertained for the Blessed Virgin from Our tender years, We had nothing at heart more than to accomplish all these things which as yet were amongst the ardent wishes of the Church, that the honor of the Most Blessed Virgin should be increased, and her prerogatives should shine with a fuller light. But wishing to bring to this full maturity, We appointed a special congregation of our venerable brothers, the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, illustrious by their piety, their wisdom, and their knowledge of the sacred sciences, and we also selected Ecclesiatics, both secular and regular, well trained in theological discipline, that they should most carefully weigh all those things which relate to the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, and report to us their opinion. And, although from the entreaties lately received by us for at length defining the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, the opinions of most of the Bishops of the Church were understood, however, We sent Encyclical Letters, dated at Gaeta, the 2d day of February, in the year 1849, to all our Venerable Brethren the Bishops of all the Catholic world, in order that having offered prayers to God they might sig-

nify to Us, in writing, what was the piety and devotion of their flocks towards the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God, and especially what the Bishops themselves thought about promulgating the definition, or what they desired in order that We might pronounce Our supreme judgment as solemnly as possible.

Certainly we were filled with no slight consolation when the replies of our Venerable Brethren came to Us. For, with an incredible joyfulness, gladness, and zeal, they not only confirmed their own singular piety, and that of their clergy and faithful people toward the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin, but they even entreated of us with a common voice that the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin should be defined by Our supreme judgment and authority. Nor, indeed, were We filled with less joy when our venerable brothers, the Cardinals of the Special Congregation aforesaid, and the consulting theologians chosen by Us, after a diligent examination, demanded from Us with equal alacrity and zeal this definition of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God.

Afterwards walking in the illustrious footsteps of Our predecessors, and desiring to proceed duly and properly, We proclaimed and held a Consistory, in which We addressed Our Brethren, the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, and with the greatest consolation of mind We heard them entreat of Us that We should promulgate the dogmatic definition of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mother of God.

Therefore having full trust in the Lord that the opportune time had come for defining the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary Mother of God, which the Divine words, venerable tradition, the perpetual opinion

of the Church, the singular agreement of Catholic Prelates and Faithful, and the signal acts and constitutions of Our predecessors wonderfully illustrate and proclaim; having most diligently weighed all things, and poured forth to God assiduous and fervent prayers, We resolved that We should no longer delay to sanction and define, by Our supreme authority, the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin, and thus to satisfy the most pious desires of the Catholic world and Our own piety towards the Most Holy Virgin, and, at the same time, to honor more and more the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, since whatever honor and praise is given to the Mother redounds to the Son.

Wherefore, after We had unceasingly, in humility and fasting, offered Our own prayers and the public prayers of the Church to God the Father, through his Son, that He would deign to direct and confirm our mind by the power of the Holy Ghost, and implored the aid of the entire heavenly host, and invoked the Paraclete with sighs, and He thus inspiring, to the honor of the Holy and undivided Trinity, to the glory and ornament of the Virgin Mother of God, to the exaltation of the Catholic Faith and the increase of the Catholic religion, by the authority of Jesus Christ our Lord, of the Blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, and ours **We declare, pronounce and define that the doctrine which holds that the Blessed Virgin Mary, at the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace of the Omnipotent God, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind, was preserved immaculate from all stain of original sin, has been revealed by God, and therefore should firmly and constantly be believed by all the faithful.** Wherefore, if any shall dare—which God forbid—

to think otherwise than as it has been defined by Us, they should know and understand that they are condemned by their own judgment, that they have suffered shipwreck of the faith, and have revolted from the unity of the Church; and besides, by their own act they subject themselves to the penalties justly established, if what they think they should dare to signify by word, writing, or any other outward means.

Our mouth is filled with joy, and Our tongue with exultation, and We return, and shall ever return, the most humble and the greatest thanks to Jesus Christ our Lord, because through his singular beneficence He has granted to Us, though unworthy, to offer and decree this honor, glory, and praise, to His Most Holy Mother; but We rest in the most certain hope and confidence that this Most Blessed Virgin, who, all fair and immaculate, has bruised the poisonous head of the most malignant Serpent, and brought salvation to the world, who is the praise of the Prophets and the Apostles, the honor of the Martyrs, and the crown and joy of all the Saints—who is the safest refuge and most faithful helper of all who are in danger, and the most powerful mediatrix and conciliatrix with the only-begotten Son of the whole world, and the most illustrious glory and ornament, and most firm guardian of the Holy Church, who has destroyed all heresies, and snatched from the greatest calamities of all kinds the faithful peoples and nations, and delivered Us from so many threatening dangers, will effect by her most powerful patronage that, all difficulties being removed, and all errors dissipated, Our Holy Mother the Catholic Church may flourish daily more and more throughout all nations and countries, and may reign from sea to sea to the ends of the earth, and may enjoy all peace, tranquillity, and

liberty; that the sinner may obtain pardon, the sick healing, the weak strength of heart, the afflicted consolation, and that all who are in error, their spiritual blindness being dissipated, may return to the path of truth and justice, and may become one flock and one shepherd.

Let all the children of the Catholic Church most dear to Us hear these Our Words, and, with a more ardent zeal of piety, religion, and love, proceed to worship, invoke, and pray to the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, conceived without original sin, and let them fly with entire confidence to this most sweet Mother of Mercy and Grace in all dangers, difficulties, doubts, and fears. For nothing is to be feared, and nothing is to be despaired of under her guidance, under her auspices, under her favor, under her protection, who, bearing towards us a maternal affection, and taking up the business of our salvation, is solicitous for the whole human race, and, appointed by God the Queen of Heaven and Earth, and exalted above all the choirs of Angels, and orders of Saints, standing at the right hand of the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ Our Lord, intercedes most powerfully, and obtains what she asks, and cannot be frustrated.

Finally, in order that this Our definition of the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary may be brought to the knowledge of the Universal Church, We will these Letters Apostolic to stand for a perpetual remembrance of the thing, commanding that to transcripts or printed copies, subscribed by the hand of some notary public, and authenticated by the seal of a person of ecclesiastical rank, appointed for the purpose, the same faith shall be paid, which would be paid to those presents if they were exhibited or shown.

Let no man interfere with this Our declaration, pro-

nunciation, and definition, or oppose and contradict it with presumptuous rashness. If any should presume to assail it, let him know that he will incur the indignation of the Omnipotent God and of His Blessed Apostles Peter and Paul.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, in the year of the Incarnation of Our Lord, 1854, the sixth of the Ides of December, in the ninth year of Our Pontificate.

PIUS IX, POPE.

Murillo—Immaculate Conception, Prado, Madrid. A Mosaic copy presented by His Holiness, Pius XI, to the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D. C

CHAPTER II

PASTORAL LETTER OF CARDINAL WISEMAN
on the
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

NICHOLAS, BY THE DIVINE MERCY AND THE FAVOR OF THE HOLY ROMAN CHURCH, CARDINAL PRIEST, OF THE TITLE OF SAINT PUDENTIANA, AND ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINISTER.

To our Dearly Beloved Brethren and Children in Christ, the Clergy Secular and Regular, and the Faithful of the said Diocese—Health and Benediction in the Lord.

Although in the course of a few days, we hope to begin our journey homeward, we cannot resist the earnest desire which we feel, to make you partakers in the consolation and joy which we have experienced in the last few days. Neither can we consider it becoming, dearly beloved in Christ, that you should have to receive, through the ordinary channels of public information, tidings of events most interesting to every Catholic heart, or that you should learn the important decision pronounced by the Sovereign Pontiff from any one but your own pastor, who had announced to you his intention of assisting at it, and who had the happiness and honor of hearing it from the very lips of the Holy Father.

You are aware, then, dearly beloved, that upon his paternal invitation, we hastened hither, to join our most eminent and illustrious brethren, in the great cause of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Mother of God, which having already been examined and discussed with great maturity, was about to receive its final examination

and decision. During the late pontificate of Gregory XVI, many petitions had been made from all parts of the Church, for the dogmatical definition of this doctrine. This spontaneous movement—which far from diminishing increased, in a manner—impelled the reigning Pontiff, during his exile at Gaeta, to issue an encyclical to all the Bishops of the Church, dated February 2, 1849, desiring them to inform him as soon as possible of their own sentiments, and those of their clergy and people, on this important subject. Indeed, previous to this, he had appointed a council of twenty theologians, secular and regular, to sift the question thoroughly, and report on all the authorities which could be collected on it from ancient writers, liturgies, and other ecclesiastical documents. This was connected with a particular council, composed of twenty-two Cardinals, distinguished for their piety and learning.

On his return from exile, the Holy Father named another board of theologians, selected from the first, with the title of a "special commission," under the presidency of the late lamented Cardinal Fornari, before whom it held frequent sittings in the course of 1852 and 1853. They unanimously reported that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception could be dogmatically defined, and that it was seasonable to define it. This decision was approved by the particular congregation of Cardinals.

Answers to the encyclical letter soon poured in from every quarter. Six hundred and two letters were received from Bishops in every part of the globe. Every one, without exception, expressed his firm belief in the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, and affectionate devotion towards this mystery of God's love and power. Four only expressed any objection to its being dogmatically defined; and fifty-two, while satisfied as to the suffi-

ciency of theological reasons for such a definition, and themselves prepared for it, hesitate as to its opportuneness at the present moment. Still all, whatever their own opinions may be, profess themselves most ready to accept and obey whatever may emanate from the Holy See. All these letters, with many others, from sovereigns, heads of religious orders, municipal corporations, and other associations, humbly petitioning for the declaration of this dogma, have been printed, together with the various treatises, in nine octavo volumes, a copy of which was presented to each Bishop on his arrival at Rome.

Such were the preliminary measures adopted by the Holy Pontiff, to ascertain the sense of the living Church, no less "the pillar and ground of truth" than that of the first centuries, upon the doctrine plainly held, on the subject of the Immaculate Conception. But to these must be added, the prayers, communions, and holy sacrifices, offered up by the clergy and faithful of every country, in obedience to the commands and earnest wishes of our common Father, especially in the Jubilee previous to the present. Neither must we forget his own earnest prayers, which he assures us have been unceasingly poured forth, accompanied by fasting and humiliation, for the grace of God, and the light of the Holy Ghost, to direct him aright in this important decision.

Having at length determined that the time was come for dogmatically pronouncing on the subject, and desirous of giving all due publicity and solemnity to this greatest exercise of the sublime power conferred by our Lord on the prince of the Apostles and their successors, the Sovereign Pontiff invited to Rome a certain number of Prelates from each country to represent its hierarchy. At the same time, he expressed his readiness to see as many others as could con-

veniently come, to attend the noble function appointed for the 8th of December.

Far beyond all anticipation were the results of this general intimation of the Holy Father's will. Though we arrived in Rome as early as the fourth of November, being called to attend at the Consistory, expected that week, still we found numbers of our eminent and illustrious colleagues already arrived; and every day swelled the venerable company of Prelates, many of whom represented most distinguished sees.[1] Who could behold without emotion the Archbishops of such churches as Milan, Toledo, Ravenna, Compostella, Naples, Rheims, Paris, Vienna, Armagh, Lyons, Strigonium, Turin, Munich, Aix, Dublin, Mechlin, Lisbon, Tuam, Florence, Pisa, or though of more recent creation those of New York or Baltimore,—united together in the same faith, as on the same spot, congregated around the centre of unity, in perfect communion, charity, and peace? Nor was it unobserved, that there were present the first Archbishops of four new hierarchies, established by the present Pontiff, those of Westminster, Sydney, Halifax, and Utrecht. To enumerate even a few of the Bishops is beyond our limits.

[1] The following are the countries from which the Prelates at Rome on the above day came to celebrate that great event. We see with pride, that (outside of Italy) no country, except France, sent a larger number of Prelates than the United States:

City of Rome	60	Bavaria	2
Pontifical States	40	Canada	1
France	21	Holland	2
Naples	11	Parma	1
United States	6	China	1
Ireland	6	Portugal	1
England	6	Modena	1
Tuscany	5	Archipelago (Is.)	1
Lombardy	5	Servia	1
Sardinia	5	Hesse-Darmstadt	1
Belgium	4	Hungary	1
Austria	2	New South Wales	2
Prussia	3	Nova Scotia	1
Spain	3		

It was impossible to behold many of these Prelates without emotion: many venerable for their age, and the long and faithful services they had rendered to the Church; some revered for their persecution and sufferings, even to exile, which they have heroically endured for Christ's truth; not a few whose countenances presented to the beholder the type of holiness which shines in their lives, so as to be like breathing pictures of eminent saints, but present evidences of the Church's mark of sanctity; and others, whose noble features and bearing, or whose mild and amiable countenances presented varied forms of the episcopal character—such was the truly grand Assemblage of Bishops, amidst which we have found ourselves standing, to our own edification, instruction, and humiliation. On four different days did this truly ecclesiastical assembly meet under the presidency of three Cardinals distinguished for piety, theological learning, and experience,—Brunelli, Caterini, and Santucci,—and attended upon by a choice assembly of divines, secular and regular. The Bull prepared for its last revision had been communicated to them, and every portion of it frankly and acutely discussed. Here was indeed seen the importance, or rather the necessity of a common ecclesiastical language as the organ of religious unity. The Bishops assembled in Rome represented fourteen different languages, as used by them in their communications with their own flocks; yet here a common tongue united them, and proved that they belonged to the Church which belongs indeed to the whole earth, but is still of one lip and one speech.

After these deliberations, which regarded the form, and not the substance, of the already decided definition, the Pope, in secret consistory, conferred with the sacred col-

lege of his Cardinals, the natural counsellors of the Apostolic See.

All was now ready, and the great day approached, a day forever memorable in the Church's annals; the day in which the greatest prerogative of holiness ever conferred on creature—exemption from the stain of original sin—was to be dogmatically declared, as it had been firmly believed, to belong to the purest of beings, after Him who chose and fitted her to be His Mother.

You will of course understand, dearly beloved in Christ, that the Church pretends to no new revelations; but claims the unfailing assistance of the Holy Spirit to guide her unto all truth and the teaching in her of her Divine founder, to the consummation of the world; and therefore the perfect assurance that whatever she is found to be at any time universally teaching, and what the Vicar of Jesus Christ pronounces to be her doctrine, has been that of the Catholic Church from the beginning, and consequently a portion of that deposit of faith, and a part of that revealed truth, which was intrusted to her by the Author and Finisher of her Faith. It was not therefore to announce to the world any new discovery, nor to demonstrate by arguments a particular theory, that this venerable assembly was convened in the magnificent basilica of St. Peter, on the memorable 8th of December just elapsed. It was, as successor to him over whose ashes and under the shadow of whose chair he stands, to pronounce a decree of unfailing certainty, that the immunity of the ever blessed Virgin Mother of God, the eternal Word incarnate, and the spotless Lamb, had been a doctrine revealed from the beginning, and if hitherto only received in implicit faith, henceforth, by virtue of his decree, to be believed by all with explicit faith—that is, as a distinct and

separate dogma, no longer involved in the general belief of what the Church teaches.

The early hour of eight in the morning was appointed for the commencement of the function; but even before this we had the consolation of securing to our own country a future blessing, connected with the memory of this glorious day, by conferring all the orders on future missionaries, including four Priests, in the chapel of the English College, so dear to our affections.

It was scarcely fully day when the unexampled assembly of prelates, about to take part in the solemnities of the day, met in the chapel of the Vatican Palace, known as the Sistine Chapel, and it was soon crowned by the arrival of the Sovereign Pontiff, surrounded by his court. The Litany of the Saints having been intoned, as on penitential occasions, the procession set forth, and presented one of the noblest ecclesiastical spectacles ever witnessed even in St. Peter's. One hundred and fifty-two Bishops, in silver copes and white mitres, and fifty-one mitred Cardinals, in the embroidered vestments of their respective orders, as Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, immediately preceded the Holy Father; and their number was increased, to the delight of all, when, later in the function, two most venerable members of the Sacred College, whom age and infirmity had long kept from attending at public ceremonies, took their places; and the learned Bishop Bouvier was carried into the ranks of his brethren, suffering from a serious illness which had attacked him on his journey.

We will not attempt to describe the magnificent celebration of the holy sacrifice which followed. All the special grandeur which accompanies it, when offered up by the Sovereign Pontiff in the greatest of churches, was this year immensely enhanced by the additional attendance of so

many illustrious Prelates. No regal or imperial ceremony could be more august than the procession of these two hundred Prelates, as each singly approached to do homage to the head of the Church, before the Mass commenced. The office of Tierce was first chanted; the Epistle and Gospel were, according to custom, sung in Greek as well as in Latin; and it was a quarter past eleven when the last note of the evangelist sounded over the shrine of St. Peter, and a silence took place, such as is difficult to imagine in a crowd of thirty or forty thousand persons, who filled the church. Every breath was held, every nerve was strained, and attention of eye and ear was keenly directed toward the Pontifical throne. The venerable Dean of the Sacred College, Cardinal Macchi, in his eighty-sixth year, but still in enjoyment of full mental vigor, approached its steps, accompanied by a Greek and an Armenian Bishop, as supporters and witnesses of his petition, together with twelve senior Archbishops of the Western church, who were assistants at the throne, and the officers of the household, who are official witnesses of such important transactions. Kneeling there, the eminent postulant, in the name of his brethren and the whole Catholic episcopate, supplicated the Holy Father to pronounce his dogmatical definition of the Immaculate Conception of the ever glorious Virgin Mary.

The Pontiff assented; but called on all to join him in invoking the light and grace of the Holy Spirit at such a solemn moment. He knelt, and in his clear, sonorous and most musical voice, entoned the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*. The choir sung the verse, and, according to practice, was going to continue, when the entire congregation, not only of assembled Bishops and clergy, but of crowded people, spontaneously and simultaneously, and with admirable harmony, took up the song, and with a voice loud as the sound

of many waters, but one as the expression of a single heart, filled the whole basilica with such a strain as perhaps never before struck against its golden vaults. It was grand beyond conception; it was sublime; and came nearer the realization of what St. John heard of heavenly music, whose armies sing with one accord, than anything which we or others ever before listened to; and it was repeated at each alternate verse, with as perfect regularity as if the whole multitude had been trained to answer the choir.

But still more sublime than this glorious strain was the silence that ensued. Standing at his throne, the Holy Father commenced the reading of the solemn decree, by which, as superior Pastor and visible head of the universal Church, as successor of the Apostles SS. Peter and Paul, and as Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth, he authoritatively and dogmatically pronounced that the immunity from original sin, or in other words, the Immaculate Conception of the ever blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, is a revealed doctrine of the Catholic Church.

He had not, however, proceeded far, before his tears and sobs interrupted his speech; and it was only by an effort, which evidently cost him great exertion, that he could make his words struggle through the tide of his emotions, and rise audible above the flood of his overpowering feelings. He succeeded, indeed, so that we had the happiness of hearing every word and syllable of his most memorable decree; but that flood of tender devotion drew after itself corresponding sentiments from the souls of others, so that scarcely a dry eye was to be seen among those who witnessed this touching scene. The cannon's voice gave the signal of the happy accomplishment of so many fervent desires, to the whole city; and the prolonged peals of gladness from the olden towers of basilicas, and the belfries of modern

churches, represented the acclaim of the earlier and later periods of unchangeable Catholicity.

The Cardinal Dean returned before the throne to return thanks, and, accompanied by the proper official personages, to request that the official deed should be drawn up of the proceeding, and the Bull issued, containing the decree just pronounced. The Mass then continued; and at the *Te Deum* which closed it, the people joined in, with the same overwhelming melody as they had introduced into the invocation of the Holy Ghost.

It is not necessary that we should enter into details concerning the less religious celebration of the day. Suffice it to say, that every mark of sincere joy was exhibited by the devout Roman people, that the evening was enlivened by the general illumination of the city, particularly of the Vatican and the Capitol—the two great centres of sacred and classical Rome. But one feature of this glorious day could not fail to strike the minds of all who enjoyed it. For several days previously, and down to the very evening before, a gloomy atmosphere, and on the vigil itself torrents of rain, such as are rare even in Italy, poured down unceasingly; and the day following the function, the same unfavorable weather returned—only during the day itself the sky was serene and beautiful, the sun shone forth in splendor, the crowds of citizens and strangers could move freely and cheerfully through the streets to the Vatican basilica in the morning, and again in the evening, to fill its interior, and assist at the sublime office and function there performed, and in the evening to crowd round its exterior, and gaze with admiration at the huge structure traced in lines of light against the deep azure sky, and then breaking into a mass of fire, as though a new and brilliant constellation had sprung from earth to heaven.

Such, dearly beloved in Christ, was the great festival which has drawn from the very ends of the earth so many men distinguished for their virtues, their learning, their dignity, and many other rare gifts, anxious to partake in its blessings and its joys, and to mark their lives with an epoch which after ages will record brightly in the Church's annals. If, last and least among them, and disclaiming all personal title to be enrolled in such a list, your Pastor has undeservingly taken his place in the midst of these, let any honor devolve upon the See and the flock, whose homage he laid at the feet of the supreme Pontiff, as that of an humble tributary, and a docile and loving family, when he exercised the highest privilege confided to the Apostolic chair, that of pronouncing on matters of faith. And be theirs also the ample blessings which the Father of the Faithful poured out upon the congregated pastors, and the sheep of Christ committed to their respective cares.

Did we not fear to weary you, we would proceed further to describe the great festivity of the Sunday following, the 10th of this month. This was the solemn consecration of the Ostian basilica, dedicated to St. Paul, and now rebuilt, after having been consumed by fire in the year 1823. In this function it pleased his Holiness, on account of the immensity of the building, to appoint six Cardinal Archbishops in different countries, to assist him in consecrating the great church of the Apostle of Nations. We had thus the unmerited honor and gratification of taking an active part in this magnificent ceremony, which was assisted by the same concourse of Prelates as attended at St. Peter's on the preceding Friday. Their names will all be engraven on marble tablets, placed on the walls of the re-consecrated basilica.

Rejoice, then, dearly beloved, again we say—rejoice. Rejoice in the Lord, who has so graciously bestowed on

His Church so signal a blessing, whereby the piety of her children has been wonderfully excited, and their love for their Mother in heaven greatly increased. Rejoice, that to her fresh glory has been given, and a new crown, the brightest that she can wear; that we may hope for new favors and more abundant graces from her affectionate and powerful intercession. Rejoice, that through this glorious event, the unity of the Church, the peace and love that reign among its pastors, their docility to their Head, their attachment to the See of Peter, and the piety and learning of so many of them have been most consolingly exhibited.

And though absent in body, yet in spirit present with you, we rejoice with you, and pray to God that from this spiritual joy He will raise more solid graces—fruit of the blessing which the Holy Father, through our hands, sends down upon you.

Given out of the Flaminian Gate of Rome, and appointed to be read in all the churches and chapels of our Diocese, on the Sunday following its publication, this fourteenth day of December, one thousand eight hundred and fifty-four.

N. CARD. WISEMAN.

Copy of Murillo's Immaculate Conception, Louvre, Paris. This copy is in the Crypt of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D. C.

CHAPTER III

A SUCCESSOR OF ST. PATRICK

Thus Describes

THE GLORIOUS CEREMONY,

At Which He Was Present,

Of Pronouncing the Dogmatic Decree Which Defines the Doctrine of

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION*

The following account of the ceremony of the definition, from the pen of the late lamented Primate, the Most Rev. Dr. Dixon, Archbishop of Armagh, cannot fail to be acceptable to our readers. This simple but natural and truthful narration accords better with the subject, and makes a more lasting impression, than the most striking flourishes of rhetoric could produce.

"It is time now to give some details of the history of the progress of that work for which we were assembled in Rome. As I have observed before, his Holiness took care that each bishop, on his arrival in Rome, should be furnished with a copy of the answers which he had received from the bishops of the world, whom he had consulted by an Encyclical Letter, when he was in exile at Gaeta, on the question of defining the Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin. Those letters, together with various dissertations on the question proposed to the bishops in the above-mentioned Encyclical, filled nine octavo volumes; a tenth has been since added to them. The Holy Father justly supposed that a perusal of these volumes would be of great use in enabling the bishops then in Rome to prepare for the discussion of the matter on which they would be called to deliberate. About the 18th of November, each of the bishops received a printed copy of a brief Narration of what Pius IX. had done, up to that time,

* Taken from Rev. V. J. Bourke's *The Bull Ineffabilis*, Dublin, 1868.

respecting the question of defining the dogma of the Immaculate Conception; and also a rough draft of the Bull, which in certain particulars was to be submitted to their deliberation. Shortly after this time, the official notice was sent round informing the patriarchs, archbishops, and bishops present in the city, that they should meet on the Monday, the 20th of November, 1854, at nine o'clock in the forenoon, in the ducal hall of the Vatican palace, under the presidency of the Cardinal delegates of his Holiness, Brunelli, Caterini, and Santucci, for the business of which they were already aware, dressed in mantelletta over the rochet; but that the prelates of the eastern rite should appear in the dress usual to them. The Patriarchs, if any should be present, were to wear the mozzetta, and to sit in the first place, according to the dignity of their respective sees. The archbishops and bishops, in taking their seats, were to follow the order of the dates of their promotion; the archbishops, at the same time, all taking seats before the bishops. We may here observe that at Rome, now, no rank below that of a Patriarch entitles an archbishop to take his seat above any other archbishop, the date of whose promotion to the archiepiscopal office is more ancient than his own. We met, then, in that noble hall on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. The deliberations lasted between four and five hours each day. When the venerable assembly of prelates were seated, they presented a sight not easily to be forgotten. At the head of the great hall, sat the Cardinal delegates in their red dress. The bishops sat in six rows running lengthwise along the sides of the hall, three rows on each side of the Cardinals. The two front rows of seats were occupied by the archbishops; the Patriarch of Alexandria, the only one of that dignity present, occupying the first seat on the right of the Cardinal delegates. The bishops, who were in the proportion of about two to one as compared with the archbishops, occupied the other four rows of seats.

The theologians who had assisted in preparing the bull sat at the foot of the hall on the first day; on the other days they sat near the Presidents, at the head of the hall, for the convenience of being better heard by all present. This meeting was not a council; and yet the Churches of the world were never, perhaps, so fully represented in Rome. In addition to the many bishops who came from other parts of the world, and from other sees, almost every one of the great capitals of Europe had its bishops there, Paris, Dublin, Florence, Vienna, Milan, Turin, Genoa, Munich; and reckoning the Cardinals who came to Rome for the occasion, but held their meetings for deliberation apart from us, there were also represented, London, Naples, Brussels, Lisbon, Madrid, Prague. When the bishops took their seats, according to the date of their promotion, respectively, without regard to the sees which they occupied, the combinations which resulted everywhere through the hall presented a striking idea of the Catholicity of the Church. Thus, for example, I had on my right, during those deliberations, the Archbishop of Halifax in Nova Scotia; and on my left, the Archbishop of Naxos in the Grecian Archipelago. Ireland had its full share in the representation of the world there present; for, besides the six prelates who came from Ireland, there were four other Irishmen whose sees lay in other parts of the world—viz., the Archbishop of Halifax, in Nova Scotia, and the Archbishop of Baltimore, the Archbishop of New York, and the Bishop of Pittsburg, in the United States of America. So that the Most Holy Virgin, could count there, of the sons of Ireland, six archbishops and four bishops, all of whom had made a long, long journey to do her honor.

"At those meetings, the question simply turned on the prefatory parts of the bull; for the Chief Pontiff having before consulted all the bishops, by his Encyclical Letter from Gaeta, had already concluded, not only that the Immacu-

late Conception of Mary could be defined as a dogma of faith, but also that the time had now arrived for such definition. The prefatory parts of the bull, therefore, as I said, were alone submitted to the discussion of the bishops, who were to say whether those parts ought to be diffuse or concise, what they ought to state, and how they ought to be arranged; or in other words, they were to say whether, as regards all these points, they approved of the draft of the bull which was now submitted to them. The object of the meeting was most clearly stated by Cardinal Brunelli, who, as senior delegate of his Holiness, acquitted himself of his high function in a manner worthy of his exalted character, and far above any praise which I could bestow on it. The bishops most freely expressed themselves on the matter submitted to them; and when they spoke in favour of a change of any kind, in those prefatory parts of the draft of the bull which all held in their hands, then it devolved on the theologians, who had assisted in drawing up the bull, to reply to those observations; that thus, if any change were to be made, it might be made after due examination of all that could be said *for* and *against*. Of course all the bishops did not speak; for, had they done so, many days would have been required for our meeting. However, a great many bishops spoke, at least once—and many spoke often; of which latter, the principal were, the Archbishop of Dublin, the Archbishop of Baltimore, the Bishop of Bruges, the Bishop of Pittsburg, the Archbishop of Vienna, the Archbishop of Munich, the Archbishop of Genoa, the Archbishop of Tuam, the Bishop of Southwark, the Bishop of Montauban, &c. The most delightful spirit of harmony prevaded the assembly from first to last; and when, at the end of Friday's sitting, Cardinal Brunelli was about to dissolve the assembly, he was moved even to tears by the strong and universal expression, on the part of the bishops, of attachment to the Holy See, and of love for its present

Pontiff, and applause for the great act which he was soon to consummate.

"After this, his Holiness signified his wish that bishops and all should pray for the benediction of heaven on the great work of the 8th of December, that so it might be the occasion of more abundant blessings to the world. That those prayers might be offered with greater fervour and greater effect, his Holiness ordered that the great relics of St. Peter's, St. Mary Major's, and the churches of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme and St. Peter's ad Vincula, should be exposed to the veneration of the faithful on some altar of those churches respectively. The great relics of St. Peter's are—a portion of the true cross, a portion of the lance, and the impression of the Sacred Face on the handkerchief of Veronica. The great relic of St. Mary Major's is, the crib which served as a cradle for the infant Redeemer. The great relic of the church of Santa Croce is, the large portion of the true cross preserved there. And the great relic of the church of St. Peter ad Vincula is, the chains by which the apostle was bound in Jerusalem and in Rome, and which, having miraculously united together, now form one chain. I had the happiness of being able to offer the Holy Sacrifice at the altar of the relics in St. Peter's, and afterwards in St. Mary Major's.

"And now, with hopeful joy, all looked forward to the 8th of December. That was to be indeed a festive day for the people of Rome, who are greatly devoted to the Madonna. The Pope had ordered that the day preceding the festival should be kept a strict fast; but on the day itself, although a Friday, meat was to be allowed. The grand illumination of the cupola of St. Peter's was to come off on that day, and every street in the city was preparing for an illumination of its own. The people, however, felt great anxiety lest the weather on the 8th might be unfavourable for this display.

The rain had been almost incessant for days before, and on the 7th of December it rained in torrents during the entire day. I still felt assured that the rain would cease at the approach of a day on which so much glory was to be given to God—so much honour to Mary—and so much joy and gladness to angels and men. I could not admit the thought that on that day, when Rome, the mother and mistress of truth, was to perform an act which might almost excite the envy of the angels in heaven, the sun would not shine upon her, and give to her streets and people the festive appearance of great joy, instead of the gloomy aspect of a city in mourning, which she had worn for some days previous. And hence, on retiring to bed on the night of the 7th of December, it was rather an ardent desire which I felt for the coming of a fine day on the morrow than any anxiety about the matter. On account of this desire, I got up repeatedly during the night, to look at the appearance of the sky; and when, about four o'clock in the morning, I saw that my hopeful anticipations for the great day were to be fully realised, it delights me now to remember with what joy and thankfulness I repeated the *Ave Maris Stella* (*Hail, Star of the Sea*).

"Early in the morning, the cardinals and bishops offered up the holy sacrifice, that they might be ready to await, in the Sixtine Chapel, the forming of the procession which, about nine o'clock, was to move forward to St. Peter's by the grand staircase. A little after nine o'clock the procession of cardinals and bishops began to move, chanting the Litany of the Saints; and when it had entered St. Peter's, what an assemblage did that church, itself the wonder of the world, embrace within its vast limits! The Pope borne in his chair of state, wearing the tiara; the long line of the procession of cardinals and bishops, who, to the number of 200, walked two and two, wearing their mitres; the penitentiaries of St. Peter's who followed, wearing their chasubles; the long files

of soldiers who lined the procession; the Swiss guard of his Holiness, in their quaint antique costumes; the noble guard of his Holiness in their grandest uniform; crowds of the clergy of the second order; the members of the religious orders in their various habits; strangers from other lands; and, in fine, a vast portion of the Roman people. Never, perhaps, had St. Peter's witnessed such a number within its walls, and perhaps a thousand years will pass by before so large an assemblage shall be congregated there again. The Pope being seated, received the homage of the cardinals and bishops, and of the penitentiaries of St. Peter's, a long ceremony, by reason of the great number who were present. Then, after the chanting of tierce, High Mass commenced; and when the Pope, after reading the *Introit,* saying the *Kyrie,* and entoning the *Gloria in excelsis,* took his seat on the throne prepared for him, it was delightful to behold the rays of an unclouded sun greeting him through the lofty windows of St. Peter's. For, let it be ever remembered—and if I had only recorded this one fact, I should not have written this book in vain—that, although the rain fell in torrents for days before the 8th of December, and for days after it, yet, on the day itself, from the earliest dawn of morning until twelve o'clock at night, not one drop of rain fell in Rome. After the gospel had been sung in Latin and in Greek, his Holiness stood up at the throne, to perform one of the most solemn and important acts which a Chief Pontiff can ever be called upon to perform. Amidst the profound attention of the vast assembly present, he began to read, in a clear voice, the decree of the Immaculate Conception. Having read the prefatory parts, and arrived at the decree itself, his Holiness, who was ever remarkable for his tender devotion to the Holy Virgin, overpowered as if by the sense of the favour which God was conferring on him, in vouchsafing that he should be the instrument of rendering such an honour

to this most beloved Mother, burst into tears. He went on to read with a faltering voice, which betrayed the deepest emotion, the word *declaramus,* but for some minutes could proceed no farther. The effect on the vast auditory may be more easily conceived than expressed. It may be safely said, there were but few present who were not profoundly moved, and many wept like children. The Pope, having recovered from his emotion, finished the reading of the decree, and almost immediately after, the booming of the cannon of Fort St. Angelo began to echo through the vast dome of St. Peter's, and the bells of the churches through Rome rang a merry peal. The great act was consummated.

"The High Mass being concluded in St. Peter's, all began to prepare for the festivity of the evening. And, in truth, it was a festive evening. The illumination of St. Peter's was grand, and it was delightful to witness what the piety of individuals had done in illuminating the city. The piazza of St. Peter's was crowded with spectators, to witness the illumination of the dome, and the wonderful change of lights; and here a large military band was in attendance to add to the amusement. The streets were also crowded, for the weather was delightful.

"On that same evening, in one of the grand halls of the public buildings on the Capitol, one of the most distinguished of the academies of Rome—the Arcadian Academy—held a solemn meeting to celebrate the joyous event of the day. His Eminence Cardinal Wiseman presided. The large hall was crowded with a brilliant audience. The Cardinal, as president of the assembly, delivered the opening address, a most beautiful composition, in Italian. The applause from all parts of the room, which followed the conclusion of this address, was kept up for several minutes. Indeed I was never before present, in any assembly, at such an outburst of applause. Several speakers then, clerical and lay, ladies as well as gen-

tlemen, addressed the assembly, some in prose and some in poetry; all—judging by the applause which they received—acquitting themselves admirably, as if inspired by their theme.

"On the next day, the 9th of December, about nine o'clock in the forenoon, a secret consistory was held, at which all the cardinals and bishops in Rome attended. Before entering the grand hall of the Vatican, in which the assembly was held, his Holiness sent by his Master of Ceremonies a present to each cardinal and bishop, consisting of—1. A gold medal in a handsome case; the medal having on one side an image of the Blessed Virgin, with the words *Honorificentia populi nostri* ("The honour of our people"—*Judith,* xv. 10); and on the other side, an inscription stating that it was struck on the 8th of December, in honour of Mary conceived without sin, by the order of Pius IX., from the first fruits of a present which had been made to him of Australian gold. 2. A beautiful print of the Blessed Virgin. 3. A beautifully printed list of the cardinals, with their titles and the order of their creation, and of the bishops, with their sees and order of promotion, who had been present at the definition of the Immaculate Conception. This list is subjoined to this volume, with the names of places, &c., in their English form. His Holiness, having entered the hall, read for those present, in his fine, clear voice, that beautiful allocution which was soon after published. At the conclusion of it, Cardinal de Bonald, Archbishop of Lyons, rose, and on the part of all the prelates who had come to Rome, thanked his Holiness for the kindness and hospitality with which he had treated them—a kindness of which they should ever preserve a most grateful remembrance. In truth, the Cardinal could not have used language too strong to express the grateful and affectionate feeling of all present for Pius IX. When the Cardinal had done, the Pope made a few observations, *viva*

voce, declaring the happiness which it gave him to see them assembled in Rome in such numbers on this grand occasion. Then the aged Cardinal Archbishop of Capua, a most venerable and holy man, rose, and asked for all the bishops the privilege of granting a plenary indulgence to their flocks after their return from Rome. But it was with difficulty that he could be understood; for, as if overpowered by the goodness of Pius IX., he wept like a child in making the request. And here we may observe how this meeting has tended to draw the hearts of the world closer to Pius IX. There was not a cardinal or bishop in Rome who did not leave the city with feelings akin to those of the good Archbishop of Capua. They all felt, more fully than ever in their lives before, the force of the words of St. Paul, *Nam pro bono forsan quis audeat mori* ("Yet perhaps for a good man some one would die"—*Rom.* v. 7). For it would be no exaggeration to say that they all went home determined to die, if necessary, for the good, benevolent Pius IX. The Pope having assented to the request of the Archbishop of Capua, and recited the prayer usual at the conclusion of such assemblies, retired from the hall.

"On the day following, a ceremony was to take place which, in the interest that it excited was second only to the great event which had brought the prelates to Rome; this was the solemn consecration of St. Paul's church outside the walls, which had now risen from its ashes more beautiful than before. To render the ceremony of its consecration more imposing, the Pontiff would avail himself of an occasion when so many prelates were assembled in the Eternal City. On Sunday, then, the 10th of December, the Pope proceeded to the church at an early hour, amidst a vast concourse of people. The cardinals and bishops had preceded his Holiness, and about half-past eight o'clock in the morning the grand ceremony commenced, and occupied all the rest of the forenoon.

The following cardinals performed a part of the ceremony of the consecration, relieving his Holiness of a portion of the burthen:—Cardinal De Carvalho, Patriarch of Lisbon; Cardinal Falconieri Mellini, Archbishop of Ravenna; Cardinal Schwarzenberg, Archbishop of Prague; Cardinal Wiseman, Archbishop of Westminster; Cardinal Gousset, Archbishop of Rheims; Cardinal Scitowski, Primate of Hungary; and Cardinal Bonnel y Orbé, Archbishop of Toledo. The ceremony having concluded about noon, a Low Mass was then celebrated by Cardinal Sixtus Riario Sforza, Archbishop of Naples. It was stated in Rome, I know not on what authority, that the names of all the cardinals and bishops who were present at the ceremony were to be inscribed in the church, *ad perpetuam rei memoriam.*

"On the day after the consecration of St. Paul's—that is, on the 11th of December—there was a grand meeting of the Academy of the Immaculate Conception in the church of the *Santi Apostoli* in the Corso, to commemorate the great definition. The church was splendidly illuminated with many hundreds of wax lights. A large number of singers and musical performers of the first celebrity in Rome attended, and executed a splendid piece, composed and set to music for the occasion by some of the great masters. Several beautiful compositions were delivered in prose and poetry, and in various languages, among which our ancient vernacular was heard—the illustrious Archbishop of Tuam having delivered in Irish and in English a poem of considerable length, composed by His Grace for the occasion. The assembly in the church was most numerous—in fact, the sacred building, although very spacious, was inconveniently crowded. It was said that his Holiness would have attended, but for the melancholy occurrence of the death of his sacristan.

"Another of these delightful academies came off some days after, in the great hall of the Roman seminary, or Apol-

linari College. The students of the seminary, and the students of the new college of Pius IX., the *Collegium Pium*, combined to get up this display, which was most creditable to these young men, of whom we must say that an assembly of youth of more becoming appearance never met together in Rome; their mild and modest looks reflected the innocence and purity of their lives. Their beautiful compositions in prose and poetry, and their exquisite delivery, were applauded to the echo by a very select and numerous auditory. The little seminary of St. Peter's at the Vatican, as well as the English and Irish colleges, and no doubt others also, had their academies, all to celebrate the glory of their dear Mother. And it would, indeed, be a tedious thing to relate in how many ways Rome testified its delight on this great occasion. In this grand exhibition of joy, each community in Rome, religious and ecclesiastical, and every church would have its share. A triduum, or three days' devotion, was celebrated in each church, on which occasion the church was beautifully decorated; and amidst a perfect blaze of wax lights, the holy mysteries were each day celebrated; and in all the larger churches sermons were preached, and crowds of the faithful thronged their precincts."

The Moment of the Proclamation of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception

A. Busiri-Vici *Carlo De Paris disperise 1854* *Roma Fotot Danesi*

CHAPTER IV

THE VOICE OF FRANCE*

The Solemnity of the Definition

On the 21st of June, in the year 431, the whole city of Ephesus was in commotion and feverish with anxiety. Upwards of two hundred Bishops, presided over by the great St. Cyril of Alexandria, Legate of the Sovereign Roman Pontiff, were assembled in the Church of St. Mary. The object of that solemn assembly was to examine and to condemn the errors taught by Nestorius, and in particular his belief on the subject of the maternity of the Holy Virgin, to whom he refused the title of Mother of God. That error wounded the hearts of the Christian people to whom the title denied was particularly dear, and therefore the inhabitants of Ephesus collected around that episcopal assembly, impatiently awaiting the result of its deliberations. The session lasted from the morning until sunset; but nothing could weary the pious anxiety of the Faithful. Some in the sanctuary of their families prayed with fervor that the heresiarch Nestorius might be condemned, and that Mary might be preserved in the title of the Mother of God; others surrounded the church in which the Bishops were assembled awaiting the rising of the assembly to know the sooner what they should have pronounced.

At last the meeting concluded, and when the people knew that the council had decided that Mary must be called Mother of God, and pronounced anathema against whoever would think otherwise, all the people sent forth an immense acclamation of joy. That was a spectacle full of emotion; sadness

* Translated by Mrs. Anna Sadlier from the Paris "Univers," December, 1854.

gave place immediately to the most lively joy. The whole city was spontaneously illuminated and embellished with its holiday ornaments; fires were kindled in the public squares, and the Bishops were re-conducted to their residences by a multitude intoxicated with happiness, who carried lighted torches and scattered perfumes and flowers in the steps of the Fathers of the council. This was the prodigy which the faith of the Christian people and their love for Mary produced in a great city in the fifth century.

Rome has just witnessed a spectacle which yields in nothing to that which we have just recalled. The nineteenth century has produced a festival which does no less honor to the faith of its children and their devotion for the Queen of Heaven. The number of Bishops assembled in Rome on the 8th of December, 1854, was the same as at Ephesus. The object of their meeting was also the proclamation of one of the most glorious privileges of Mary, of that which is the foundation of all the others, and without which the title even of Mother of God might not, without doubt, have been conferred on her by the Most High. How could God have chosen for His Mother a creature who might have been for a single instant the subject of Satan and a daughter of sin? Not less dear to the Christian people is the title, the possession of which has just been assured to the Queen of Virgins, and which has been from the very cradle of the Church, the object of universal belief, and every age had sighed for the oracle which would proclaim it the irrefragable truth. As at Ephesus, all the Christian people were in expectation and anxiety demanding of God that its wishes might be heard, and that Mary might be proclaimed without spot or stain, immaculate in her conception. But, more happy than the

Pope Saint Celestine, Pius IX could preside himself over the assembly of his brethren the Cardinals, Patriarchs, Archbishops, and Bishops of all the earth. He had not to strike one of his brethren in the Episcopacy, and the haughty Nestorius had no emulator in the august assembly of Rome. The glory of Mary had not to be defended against any individual, and in this brilliant victory gained by the Queen of Heaven, impiety only has been vanquished; Hell alone has trembled; the entire Church has applauded, and the dogma proclaimed on the 8th of December, in the basilica of the Prince of the Apostles, by the Vicar of Jesus Christ, was proclaimed beforehand by the voice of all the Bishops, and by the ardent prayers and supplications of all the faithful children of the universal Church.

Let us describe, then, as far as the thing is possible, a festival that so many saints have desired, that so many ages have aspired to behold, that so many Pontiffs have desired to give to the Church, and that the Lord in His infinite Mercy had willed to reserve to our unhappy times as their hope and their resource. The festival of Rome is the festival of the entire world; it is presided over by the august head of the Church. Two hundred Bishops come from all corners of the world, from the far-off regions of China, the deserts of America, from the most distant islands of the ocean, to the court of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, and encircle him as by a brilliant crown; two or three hundred Prelates, of all ranks, of all titles, of all costumes, serve as his retinue of honor. Oh, how beautiful it is to see that magnificent, that incomparable procession descending the grand stairs of Constantine! What variety, what richness in the sacred ornaments! Six Cardinal Bishops, thirty-seven Cardinal Priests, eleven Cardinal

Deacons, a Patriarch of the East, forty-two Archbishops, a hundred Bishops of all rites, of every country in the world, marching in two majestic files, invested in cope and mitre. The Vicar of Jesus Christ followed them in all the splendor of his sacred Pontifical ornaments! The chant of the Litany commenced in the Sistine Chapel, and was continued through the royal hall, the stairs of Constantine, the peristyle, and the grand nave of the basilica. An immense concourse crowded to see the procession of the Pastors of the Church, and to receive the benediction of its Supreme Chief, who advanced praying with pious recollection, a holy joy playing on his lips and in his eyes. Arrived in front of the Chapel of the Holy Sacrament, the procession halted, and, after adoring God concealed in the tabernacle, the Pope finished the chanting of the Litany by the consecrated prayer; then the retinue recommenced its procession towards the Altar of the Confession, all resplendent with tiaras and precious mitres, with the cross and candlesticks of gold, with reliquaries, flowers and lights. It passed before the ancient statue of the first Pope, of him who received from Jesus Christ himself the government of the holy Church, of Peter, the fisherman of Galilee, become the Sovereign Pontiff, the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the head of the universal Church; and that first Pope whose head wore the triple crown, whose shoulders bore the cope of gold, and who held on his finger the Fisherman's ring, seemed to salute his 259th successor, Pope Pius IX, gloriously reigning, the heir of his authority and of his virtues. The College of the Holy Apostles found itself again, and recognized itself in the two hundred Bishops who followed their Supreme Pastor, and the Clergy, and the Faithful, who filled the immense basilica, are the faithful type of the primitive Church. It

was thus that in Jerusalem the Apostles assembled together, under the presidency of Peter, and the Holy Ghost was in the midst of them.

When the Sovereign Pontiff was seated upon his throne, the Cardinals, the Archbishops, the Bishops, and the prelates went in turn to render obedience to him and kiss his sacred foot or his hand, on which sparkled the Pastoral ring. It was the entire Church which venerated her august Chief, he from whom flows all spiritual jurisdiction and authority, he who sits in the chair of Peter, and who feeds both Pastors and sheep. China sent him one of her Vicars-Apostolic; America several of her Archbishops and Bishops; the isles lost in farthermost oceans had their representatives there. Europe deputed thither the greatest part of her Pastors. Rome counted there sixty Bishops, of whom thirty are Princes of the Church; the Pontifical States, France, Austria, Spain, the two Sicilies, Piedmont, Belgium, Bavaria, all the Catholic powers were there blended in the same respect and in the same love. Lutheran England, Evangelical Prussia, Calvinistic Holland sent the chiefs of their young Hierarchies thither. Empires, kingdoms, republics there gave each other the hand in unity; and when these two hundred Bishops had taken their seats, having behind them an infinite number of inferior Prelates, of Generals of Orders, of Priests, of Religious, and of Faithful, and at their head the Sovereign Roman Pontiff, could we not say that the Universal Church was present? What did it lack? A Bishop of Russia. The entire world was there to celebrate the triumph of the Queen of Heaven. The empire of the Autocrat, of him who pretends *par excellence* to the title of "Orthodox," is the only one which has no Bishop in that assembly, gathered from the four corners of

the world, and formed of all the Catholic rites. Let us hope that she of whom Scripture chants that she is strong and "terrible as an army in battle array," will remember this in the days of the great combats.

The chanting of the Tierce is terminated; the Obedience is finished; and, if we may presume to employ this term, the assembly has assumed that aspect that we admire in the old paintings and engravings in which the Council of Trent and the other great assizes of the Holy Catholic Church are represented, but with that additional majesty and that grander character that the presence of the august and Supreme Pastor imprints upon it. The Holy Sacrifice is about to commence, and the High Priest of the Universal Law advances towards the altar to immolate the Adorable Victim. We do not wish to describe the beauty of the ceremonies, the harmonious melody of the chants consecrated by ages, and the rites so grand, so splendid, which invest the holy function celebrated by the Supreme Pontiff; this picture would carry us too far, and we must hasten to arrive at the solemn moment, to the reading of the Decree, in honor of which all this pomp is displayed, all these Bishops have come from afar, and which must assure to Mary the most glorious of her privileges, and the purest of her Mysteries.

The Gospel has been chanted in the two languages consecrated by the Holy Liturgy, and in the two rites prescribed for the Papal Mass. It is the moment so impatiently expected, the hour marked from all eternity in the decrees of the mercy of the Most High; all eyes are turned towards the throne of the Supreme Pontiff; a solemn silence reigns in the immense assembly; every heart is elevated towards Heaven. The Universal Church deputes to the throne of the Vicar of

Jesus Christ five of her Pastors to beg of him to satisfy at last the devotion of the Christian people, and to define that the belief in the Immaculate Conception of Mary is an article of Catholic faith. His Eminence the Cardinal Dean of the Sacred College, accompanied by the Patriarch of Alexandria, the Greek Archbishop and Bishop, is charged to bear to the Pontifical throne the expression of the wish of the Church, and to address to him her urgent prayers. The Vicar of Jesus Christ hearkens to a supplication so agreeable to his heart, so conformable to the wish of his own piety, and he declares that he wishes once more to invoke the lights of the Holy Ghost, and to consult the Divine will. He kneels down without leaving his throne; all the Church prostrates itself with him, and he intones the *Veni Creator,* the singing of which is continued by the Clergy and by the immense concourse of the Faithful. In the vast basilica an unanimous and ardent prayer issues from every lip, and an all-powerful supplication ascends toward the throne of God. The hymn concluded, the Vicar of Christ arose and chanted the prayers; then, in presence of all the Catholic Church represented by fifty-four Cardinals, by one Patriarch, by forty-two Archbishops, and by one hundred Bishops, by two or three hundred inferior Prelates, by many thousands of Priests and of Religious of all rites, from all countries, of all orders, and of all costumes, and at least fifty thousand Faithful of all conditions and of all countries; with the mitre on his head, and in the attitude of the Supreme Doctor charged with interpreting the sentences and the traditions, and with pronouncing the oracles of the Faith, he commenced the reading of the Decree in that voice grave and sonorous, sweet and majestic, which gives to his words an indefinable charm. After the invoca-

tion of the Most Holy Trinity, of the Apostles Peter and Paul, to the moment in which he reached the passage concerning the Immaculate Conception, his voice softened, tears mounted to his eyes, and when he pronounced the sacramental words *declaramus, pronuntiamus et definimus,* his emotion, his tears interrupted him, and he is obliged to stop to wipe away the tears which stream from his eyes; yet we see that he makes a supreme effort to control his emotion, and he then resumes the reading with that firm and authoritative voice which becomes the Judge of the Faith. His heart mounts to his lips, and we know not whether he preaches or reads, so animated is his voice, so full of emotion; and we feel that the Father of Christendom, the devoted Son of Mary, the Supreme Pastor of the Church, and the infallible Judge of the Faith, speak together; or, rather, that it is the Divine Spirit which speaks by his mouth, and which mingles with the oracles of the doctor of the truth the sentiments of a heart tenderly devoted to Mary. His emotion recommenced when, after having declared that the belief in the Immaculate Conception has been from all time the belief of the Catholic Church, that consequently it must be professed by all her children, and after establishing the penalties they incur who will be sufficiently rash to contradict it, he came again to speak of the graces for which he acknowledged himself indebted to the Most Holy Mother of God, of the hopes that he founds upon her protection for the assuaging of the evils of society and of the Church, and of the happiness that he experiences in advancing the glory of Her whom he has always loved so much, and from whom emanate all the gifts and graces from on High.

But to what purpose prolong an analysis made upon recol-

lections which cannot be perfect or faithful, and which, moreover, will be useless, for we shall soon receive the text of the Decree; but we cannot but admire the manner, strong and sweet at the same time, with which the Vicar of Jesus Christ has proclaimed the infallible oracle which places securely upon the forehead of our great Queen and Mistress the glorious diadem of an Immaculate Conception! Oh! how beautiful it was to see Pius IX shedding tears of tenderness in crowning his beloved Mother! O precious tears, which the Angels have gathered, and which will sparkle like diamonds upon the crown that the Queen of Angels reserves for the Pontiff who has given her a glory so magnificent! How beautiful were those Cardinals, Archbishops, and Bishops, listening with love to the Decree which proclaimed the greatness of Mary, gathering with respect the words which fell from the lips of the Supreme Pontiff, and which they will go to repeat throughout the universe, to the infidels of China, to the savages of America, and to the far distant isles of Polynesia, in every language, in every empire, in every quarter of the habitable world! O august senate of the Catholic Church, may you be blessed for assisting at so beautiful a festival! May the fatigues of your long voyages, of your long travels, be superabundantly recompensed by the splendor added on this day to the diadem of the Queen of the Church! May they be happy, your faithful people, when they gather from your lips the words which you have gathered yourselves from the infallible lips of the Sovereign Pastor, and that you say to them: "We were there, we have seen, we have heard! That crown which glitters on the brow of our Mother and thine we have helped to place there!" How beautiful it was to see all those Clergy of the inferior

ranks of the Hierarchy, uniting themselves with the Bishops to hail the decree, and prepare themselves to go to proclaim it in the most remote places, in the most distant missions, in the pulpits of the greatest cities and the most humble hamlets! And you, Faithful of all ranks, of every sex and condition, who filled the immense church of the Prince of Apostles, have you ever seen a higher expression of Catholic unity? Oh! but it was beautiful! but it was agreeable to the Lord, that innumerable assembly, in which all hearts throbbed like one for love of Mary, in which only one mouth was opened as it were, although all spoke, first to beg light from the Holy Ghost in unison with the Holy Father, the Bishops, and the Clergy, afterwards to thank God and salute Mary crowned with the diadem of the Immaculate Conception; for in that consists one of the characteristics the most touching and the most catholic of this admirable *fête!* Scarcely issued from the lips of the Vicar of Christ, the invocation of the Spirit of light and love is found upon all lips, and one might have said that only a single voice, a voice composed of fifty thousand voices, mounted to Heaven. So the "Te Deum" was no sooner intoned by the Supreme Pontiff than it rose throughout the entire basilica, and it was a hymn boundless in thanks and gratitude, an immense, a universal acclamation of the glorious privilege of Mary. A prayer, ardent and unanimous, which the salvos of the artillery and the pealing of the bells of the city carried to Heaven, and deposited at the feet of the Immaculate Virgin.

But that brilliant crown, which the word of the Vicar of Jesus Christ had just placed upon the blessed head of our Queen and our Mistress, shall it not have a material sign which will symbolize it, and transmit the memory of it to

future generations? Pius IX thinks so. A crown of the finest gold, enriched with the most precious stones, is prepared to decorate the head of the Immaculate Virgin, which the mosaic art has represented *in æternum,* above the high altar of the Chapel of the Canons. After the "Te Deum" this splendid diadem is based by the Pope on the same altar of the Confession, and the Sovereign Pontiff, preceded by his magnificent and imposing train, goes processionally to carry to the venerated Madonna the diadem prepared by the signal piety of the Chapter of St. Peter's. With his sacred hands he deposited the precious crown upon the brow of the august Sovereign of Heaven and earth, of the glorious Queen of the Church; in presence of the whole court of the Church Militant, in presence, too, of the whole court of the Church Triumphant; for it is not permitted to doubt that the Angels assisted at that *fête* in which she whom they had eighteen centuries and a half since saluted with these words: *Ave Maria, gratia plena,* is to-day saluted by those other words: *Ave Maria, sine labe originali concepta!* a double salutation which is only one, for the last is the development, the completion of the first. Reign, then, for ever, O glorious Princess! O most beloved Mother! crowned doubly in Heaven by thy Son, who is God, on the earth by the Vicar of thy Son, who is the Pope Pius IX, by the Universal Church, and by all the Christian people!

We might now leave the basilica of St. Peter's, where the ceremony has been concluded, so to say, in transmitting to posterity a visible sign which will not perish; but it is necessary before doing so to point out two or three incidents which have singularly affected the few persons who witnessed them. Do you see that sedan chair which, at half-past eight o'clock,

is carried towards the confession by the servants of the Holy Father in their red and brilliant livery? They walk with precaution and respect; they are conducting to the *fête* a holy and learned Bishop, invited by the Holy Father, seized on the voyage by sickness, and who wished to brave the fatigues of a long road, and the dangers of an agitated sea, and whom the tempests, even the approach of death, could not deter from repairing to Rome to place his gem in the diadem of the Queen of Heaven, to hear the dogma proclaimed which he had called for with his ardent wishes, his fervent prayers, and by his votes as Doctor and as Bishop. He heard proceeding from the infallible mouth of Peter, speaking by Pius IX, that desired oracle, and he withdrew then content and joyful; he can now die; he has seen the triumph of his beloved Mother on the earth; he also has gained his battle—he has not been deficient in a courage not less heroic than that of the general whom the whole world lately hailed with its eulogiums and its regrets. On issuing from the church, one of his parishioners met him and expressed his joy at seeing him. "And I, too," replied the pious and meek Prelate, "am content. I have seen that which I so much desired. I have come to die here." "Oh, no, my Lord," replied the other, "the Holy Virgin will cure you!" "If Mary conceived without sin will cure me, I shall return to my diocese to proclaim there her power and her goodness; but I can die better here; it will not be bad to die here."

That Bishop of the old times was a French Bishop—the holy and courageous Bishop of Mans—who preferred to expose himself to the danger of dying on the sea or on a road of France or Italy, rather than to fail at the call of the Sovereign Pontiff to be present at the meeting given by the

Holy Virgin herself. And we see here how our Bishops know how to love Mary, and what they can do and suffer for her glory.

And that venerable old man, all robed in white, who walks supported by two persons, and goes to sit down in the midst of the Cardinals, who is he? What comes he to do in this assembly, weighed down by his years and scarcely able to creep along? He is a Prince of the Church, dear to the poor, for whom he is a liberal provider, although poor himself; the friend of Gregory XVI; the ornament by his virtues of the Sacred College; he is the Cardinal Bianchi; he has wished to drag himself to this *fête* to hear the reading of the Decree which fulfils his wishes—to assist at the triumph of the Queen of the Church—and after hearing proclaimed by the Vicar of Jesus Christ, the dogma so dear to his religious heart, to withdraw supported upon the arms which sustain him, and without doubt to repeat in his heart the canticle of the holy Simeon when he saw the Lord in the Temple: *Nunc dimittis servum.*

Then, while the Sovereign Pontiff is taking off his sacred ornaments, see approaching him two Religious, two chiefs of the great and holy family of the seraphic St. Francis, the General of the Conventuals and the General of the Observants. The one holds a branch of the golden lily, the other a branch of the silver lily; they present them to the Holy Father, and beg of him to receive them as a feeble homage of the gratitude of the Franciscan family for the new glory that he had just given to the Mother of Christians, to the special patroness of their secular institute, for the consecration definitively and infallibly stamped upon the belief that was always the dearest inheritance of its doctors, and

its schools, and its numberless Saints and Blessed, which it had given to the Church Triumphant. It is with tears that this tribute of love is offered by the pious children of St. Francis; it is with tears that it is received by the Sovereign Pontiff.

But there is not, in the Catholic Church, any feast which is truly beautiful if the people do not make the principal ornament of it. We have spoken of the Princes of the Church, of all the orders of the Clergy; we have seen all the holy Hierarchy rival each other in eagerness and love; but the Faithful, but the people, what part did they take in this festival? To them it appertained to impress its true character upon it. Have their hearts been moved? It is really and truly a popular and universal belief that has been defined, and are the children of the Church desirous to say and to see decreed to Mary the title of Immaculate in her Conception? Ah! the reply to that question has been made; it is there all living. See that multitude from seven o'clock in the morning direct itself towards the ancient basilica of the Prince of the Apostles, and which fills its vast nave and even the chapels, ordinarily so solitary, which squeezes itself forward and is incessantly renewed. There is a continual flowing and reflowing of the human tide. The vast entrances of the basilica cannot suffice for these thousands of Faithful who besiege and encumber them. Thirty thousand persons, as the best judges say, are together in the church, and as the crowd entered and flowed away without cessation from seven o'clock in the morning until an hour after mid-day, at least sixty thousand persons must have assisted at the *fête*. And what pious recollection in that multitude! What an air of satisfaction! How the *Veni Creator* and the *Te Deum*

moved and agitated it, and how it chanted with love and with faith those prayers of invocation and praise! And the rest of the population, as it filled the churches of the Holy City, as it gave itself to the movement to prepare the illumination which changed the night of this beautiful day into a heaven all strewed with stars! How, at the sound of the bells which announced the consummation of that great act, it prostrated itself, and hailed the Virgin without spot or blemish! What holy canticles were addressed to her in the convents, in the bosom of families, in the secrecy of hearts!

Then came the evening, and it was then that the faith, that the joy of the people shone and burst out, and the entire city became a temple raised to Mary. From the previous evening, notwithstanding the rain, and despite the tempest, thousands of lights saluted the dawning of the day which was about to break: but the evening of the *fête* the city was literally a city of fire; not a balcony, not a window, not a skylight which had not its illumination lamps. The great thoroughfares of the city the Corso, the Papal way, Ripetta, are luminous streams; the public squares, the monuments, the churches, bear piles of fire. The Capitol gleams and flashes with light, and the orchestras in the open air hail in the name of the Roman people the triumph of the Queen of Heaven, who is also the Queen of the Church of Rome. Everywhere are transparencies and images of Mary, inscriptions in her honor; above all the device, *Maria sine labe originali concepta.* An immense multitude urged their way through the city; the whole population is in the streets, on the squares, but especially at St. Peter's, whose dome bore high in the air a sparkling diadem. One might say that a special providence had wished to give to that illumination,

of which every one acknowledged the greatness and the beauty, an unaccustomed splendor. A dark cloud, the only one there was in the sky, which was there as if to keep us in mind of the rain and tempest of the preceding night, formed behind the cupola a sombre and dark background, which admirably set off that crown of fire which the Eternal City offered to the Queen of the Universe. O night more beautiful than the day! O pavilions of light, kindled to illuminate the festival of Our Mother! O Queen of the Heavens! what crown more beautiful can the earth offer to you?

Such has been the festival of the 8th December at Rome, or rather such has been a part, the most feeble perhaps, of that imperishable *fête*. For the rest: that is only the first day; it is the commencement of the *fêtes*. On the 10th, another solemnity attracted to St. Paul's, outside the walls, the whole of the Holy City: the Pope, assisted by two hundred Bishops and all the Clergy, went there to consecrate the Church of the Apostle of the Gentiles, the dedication of which is thus allied to the triumph of the Queen of Heaven. On the evening of the same day the Academy of Arcades held in the Capitol, in the great hall of the Senate, a solemn sitting, in which Cardinal Wiseman celebrated the recently defined mystery; and the next day, the 11th, the Academy of the Immaculate Conception had announced a sitting not less brilliant in the Church of the Holy Apostles, to *fête* the glorious privilege of which it bears the name, and in which it has always professed the belief. Triduums are held in the majority of the churches. In fine, it is a festival without end, and indeed the people cannot weary of singing the glory, of celebrating the victory, of the great and powerful Queen of Earth and Heaven. And that festival, commenced

in Rome, will be continued throughout the entire world. The bell of St. Peter's will set in motion the bells of the entire earth, and even in the solitudes of the New World, and in the furthermost countries of the Old, the word of the Sovereign Pontiff will be repeated, and hailed with acclamation. Everywhere the Immaculate Conception shall be celebrated and glorified. At this thought, may we not hope, for the world and for the Church, the great prosperity which the Saints have foretold for the period which would see the incomparable privilege of Mary proclaimed? May we not believe, that Our Mother will repay to us in blessings the homage that we have offered her? How doubt that the increase of glory which she has just received is, for us, the pledge of a better present, and a more prosperous future? That has been the hope of the Saints; it is the hope of Pius IX, this other Holy Pontiff, this Angel of the Church, whose Pontificate will be henceforward glorious amongst all those which have advanced the reign of Mary, which have exalted her privileges and her greatness!

The Immaculate—on top of the column—Piazza d'Espagna, Rome

CHAPTER V

MARY, THE SECOND EVE *

CARDINAL NEWMAN

As regards the Blessed Virgin then, I shall postpone the question of devotion for a while, and inquire first into the doctrine of the undivided Church (to use your controversial phrase), on the subject of her prerogatives.

* * * * *

What is the great rudimental teaching of Antiquity from its earliest date concerning her? By "rudimental teaching," I mean the *primâ facie* view of her person and office, the broad outline laid down of her, the aspect under which she comes to us, in the writings of the Fathers. She is the Second Eve.[1] Now let us consider what this implies. Eve had a definite, essential position in the First Covenant. The fate of the human race lay with Adam; he it was who represented us. It was in Adam that we fell; though Eve had fallen, still, if Adam had stood, we should not have lost those supernatural privileges which were bestowed upon him as our first father. Yet though Eve was not the head of the race, still, even as regards the race, she had a place of her own; for Adam, to whom was divinely committed the naming of all things, named her "the Mother of all the living," a name surely expressive, not of a fact only, but of a dignity; but further, as she thus had her own general relation to the human race, so again had she her own special place, as regards its trial and its fall in Adam. In those primeval events, Eve had an integral share. "The woman, being seduced, was in the transgression." She listened to the Evil Angel; she offered the fruit to her husband, and he ate of it. She co-operated, not as an irresponsible instrument, but

* From *Letter to Pusey.*
[1] Vide Essay on Development of Doctrine, 1845, p. 384, &c.

intimately and personally in the sin; she brought it about. As the history stands, she was a *sine-qua-non,* a positive, active, cause of it. And she had her share in its punishment; in the sentence pronounced on her, she was recognized as a real agent in the temptation and its issue, and she suffered accordingly. In that awful transaction there were three parties concerned,—the serpent, the woman, and the man; and at the time of their sentence, an event was announced for a distant future, in which the three same parties were to meet again, the serpent, the woman, and the man; but it was to be a second Adam and a second Eve, and the new Eve was to be the mother of the new Adam. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." The Seed of the woman is the Word Incarnate, and the Woman, whose seed or son He is, is His mother Mary. This interpretation, and the parallelism it involves, seem to me undeniable; but at all events (and this is my point) the parallelism is the doctrine of the Fathers, from the earliest times; and, this being established, we are able, by the position and office of Eve in our fall, to determine the position and office of Mary in our restoration.

I shall adduce passages from their writings, noting their respective countries and dates; and the dates shall extend from their births or conversions to their deaths, since what they propound is at once the doctrine which they had received from the generation before them, and the doctrine which was accepted and recognized as true by the generation to whom they transmitted it.

Now, what is especially noticeable in these three writers,* is, that they do not speak of the Blessed Virgin merely as the physical instrument of our Lord's taking flesh, but as an intelligent, responsible cause of it; her faith and obedi-

* The three writers referred to are Justin, Irenaeus and Tertullian.

ence being accessories to the Incarnation, and gaining it as her reward. As Eve failed in these virtues, and thereby brought on the fall of the race in Adam, so Mary by means of the same had a part in its restoration. You surely imply, pp. 151—156, that the Blessed Virgin was only a physical instrument of our redemption; "what has been said of her by the Fathers as the chosen *vessel* of the Incarnation, was applied *personally* to her," (that is, by Catholics,) p. 151, and again "the Fathers speak of the Blessed Virgin as the *instrument* of our salvation, *in that* she gave birth to the Redeemer," pp. 155, 156; whereas St. Augustine, in well-known passages, speaks of her as more exalted by her sanctity than by her relationship to our Lord.[2] However, not to go beyond the doctrine of the Three Fathers, they unanimously declare that she was *not* a mere instrument in the Incarnation, such as David, or Judah, may be considered; they declare she co-operated in our salvation not merely by the descent of the Holy Ghost upon her body, but by specific holy acts, the effect of the Holy Ghost within her soul; that, as Eve forfeited privileges by sin, so Mary earned privileges by the fruits of grace; that, as Eve was disobedient and unbelieving, so Mary was obedient and believing; that, as Eve was a cause of ruin to all, Mary was a cause of salvation to all; that as Eve made room for Adam's fall, so Mary made room for our Lord's reparation of it; and thus, whereas the free gift was not as the offence, but much greater, it follows that, as Eve co-operated in effecting a great evil, Mary co-operated in effecting a much greater good.

And, besides the run of the argument, which reminds the reader of St. Paul's antithetical sentences in tracing the analogy between Adam's work and our Lord's work, it is

[2] Opp. t. 3, p. 2, col. 369, t. 6, col. 342.

well to observe the particular words under which the Blessed Virgin's office is described. Tertullian says that Mary "blotted out" Eve's fault, and "brought back the female sex," or "the human race, to salvation"; and St. Irenæus says that "by obedience she was the cause or occasion" (whatever was the original Greek word) "of salvation to herself and the whole human race"; that by her the human race is saved; that by her Eve's complication is disentangled; and that she is Eve's Advocate, or friend in need. It is supposed by critics, Protestant as well as Catholic, that the Greek word for Advocate in the original was Paraclete; it should be borne in mind, then, when we are accused of giving our Lady the titles and offices of her Son, that St. Irenæus bestows on her the special Name and Office proper to the Holy Ghost.

So much as to the nature of this triple testimony; now as to the worth of it. For a moment put aside St. Irenæus, and put together St. Justin in the East with Tertullian in the West. I think I may assume that the doctrine of these two Fathers about the Blessed Virgin, was the received doctrine of their own respective times and places; for writers after all are but witnesses of facts and beliefs, and as such they are treated by all parties in controversial discussion. Moreover, the coincidence of doctrine which they exhibit, and again, the antithetical completeness of it, show that they themselves did not originate it. The next question is, Who did? for from one definite organ or source, place or person, it must have come. Then we must inquire, what length of time would it take for such a doctrine to have extended, and to be received, in the second century over so wide an area; that is, to be received before the year 200 in Palestine, Africa, and Rome. Can we refer the common source of these local traditions to a date much later than that of the

Apostles, since St. John died within twenty years of St. Justin's conversion and sixty of Tertullian's birth? Make what allowance you will for whatever possible exceptions can be taken to this representation; and then, after doing so, add to the concordant testimony of these two Fathers the evidence of St. Irenæus, which is so close upon that of the School of St. John himself in Asia Minor. "A three-fold cord," as the wise man says, "is not quickly broken." Only suppose there were so early and so broad a testimony, to the effect that our Lord was a mere man, the son of Joseph; should we be able to insist upon the faith of the Holy Trinity as necessary to salvation? Or supposing three such witnesses could be brought to the fact that a consistory of elders governed the local churches, or that each local congregation was an independent Church, or that the Christian community was without priests, could Anglicans maintain their doctrine that the rule of Episcopal succession is necessary to constitute a Church? And then recollect that the Anglican Church especially appeals to the ante-Nicene centuries and taunts us with having superseded their testimony.

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And now, I proceed to dwell for a while upon two inferences, which it is obvious to draw from the rudimental doctrine itself; the first relates to the sanctity of the Blessed Virgin, the second to her dignity.

1. Her sanctity. She holds, as the Fathers teach us, that office in our restoration which Eve held in our fall:—now, in the first place, what were Eve's endowments to enable her to enter upon her trial? She could not have stood against the wiles of the devil, though she was innocent and sinless, without the grant of a large grace. And this she had;—a heavenly gift, which was over and above and addi-

tional to that nature of hers, which she received from Adam, a gift which had been given to Adam, also before her, at the very time (as it is commonly held) of his original formation. This is Angelican doctrine, as well as Catholic; it is the doctrine of Bishop Bull. He has written a dissertation on the point. He speaks of the doctrine which "many of the Schoolmen affirm, that Adam was created in grace, that is, received a principle of grace and divine life from his very creation, or in the moment of the infusion of his soul; of which," he says, "for my own part I have little doubt." Again, he says, "It is abundantly manifest from the many testimonies alleged, that the ancient doctors of the Church did, with a general consent, acknowledge, that our first parents in the state of integrity, had in them something more than nature, that is, were endowed with the divine principle of the Spirit, in order to a supernatural felicity."

Now, taking this for granted, because I know that you and those who agree with you maintain it as well as we do, I ask you, have you any intention to deny that Mary was as fully endowed as Eve? is it any violent inference, that she, who was to co-operate in the redemption of the world, at least was not less endowed with power from on high, than she who, given as a helpmate to her husband, did in the event but co-operate with him for its ruin? If Eve was raised above human nature by that indwelling moral gift which we call grace, is it rash to say that Mary had even a greater grace? And this consideration gives significance to the Angel's salutation of her as "full of grace,"—an interpretation of the original word which is undoubtedly the right one, as soon as we resist the common Protestant assumption that grace is a mere external approbation or acceptance, answering to the word "favour," whereas it is, as the Fathers teach, a real inward condition or superadded

quality of soul. And if Eve had this supernatural inward gift given her from the first moment of her personal existence, is it possible to deny that Mary too had this gift from the very first moment of her personal existence? I do not know how to resist this inference:—well, this is simply and literally the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. I say the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is in its substance this, and nothing more or less than this (putting aside the question of degrees of grace); and it really does seem to me bound up in the doctrine of the Fathers, that Mary is the second Eve.

It is indeed to me a most strange phenomenon that so many learned and devout men stumble at this doctrine; and I can only account for it by supposing that in matter of fact they do not know what we mean by the Immaculate Conception; and your Volume (may I say it?) bears out my suspicion. It is a great consolation to have reason for thinking so,—reason for believing that in some sort the persons in question are in the position of those great Saints in former times, who are said to have hesitated about the doctrine, when they would not have hesitated at all, if the word "Conception" had been clearly explained in that sense in which now it is universally received. I do not see how any one who holds with Bull the Catholic doctrine of the supernatural endowments of our first parents, has fair reason for doubting our doctrine about the Blessed Virgin. It has no reference whatever to her parents, but simply to her own person; it does but affirm that, together with the nature which she inherited from her parents, that is, her own nature, she had a superadded fulness of grace, and that from the first moment of her existence. Suppose Eve had stood the trial, and not lost her first grace; and suppose she had eventually had children, those children from the first mo-

ment of their existence would, through divine bounty, have received the same privilege that she had ever had; that is, as she was taken from Adam's side, in a garment, so to say, of grace, so they in turn would have received what may be called an immaculate conception. They would have then been conceived in grace, as in fact they are conceived in sin. What is there difficult in this doctrine? What is there unnatural? Mary may be called, as it were, a daughter of Eve unfallen. You believe with us that St. John Baptist had grace given to him three months before his birth, at the time that the Blessed Virgin visited his mother. He accordingly was *not* immaculately conceived, because he was alive before grace came to him; but our Lady's case only differs from his in this respect, that to her the grace of God came, not three months merely before her birth, but from the first moment of her being, as it had been given to Eve.

But it may be said, How does this enable us to say that she was conceived without *original sin?* If Anglicans knew what we mean by original sin, they would not ask the question. Our doctrine of original sin is not the same as the Protestant doctrine. "Original sin," with us, cannot be called sin, in the mere ordinary sense of the word "sin"; it is a term denoting Adam's sin as transferred to us, or the state to which Adam's sin reduces his children; but by Protestants it seems to be understood as sin, in much the same sense as actual sin. We, with the Fathers, think of it as something negative, Protestants as something positive. Protestants hold that it is a disease, a radical change of nature, an active poison internally corrupting the soul, infecting its primary elements, and disorganizing it; and they fancy that we ascribe a different nature from ours to the Blessed Virgin, different from that of her parents, and from that of fallen Adam. We hold nothing of the kind; we con-

sider that in Adam she died, as others; that she was included, together with the whole race, in Adam's sentence; that she incurred his debt, as we do; but that, for the sake of Him who was to redeem her and us upon the Cross, to her the debt was remitted by anticipation, on her the sentence was not carried out, except as regards her natural death, for she died when her time came, as others. All this we teach, but we deny that she had original sin; for by original sin we mean, as I have already said, something negative, viz., this only, the *deprivation* of that supernatural unmerited grace which Adam and Eve had on their first formation,—deprivation and the consequences of deprivation. Mary could not merit, any more than they, the restoration of that grace; but it was restored to her by God's free bounty, from the very first moment of her existence, and thereby, in fact, she never came under the original curse, which consisted in the loss of it. And she had this special privilege, in order to fit her to become the Mother of her and our Redeemer, to fit her mentally, spiritually for it; so that, by the aid of the first grace, she might so grow in grace, that, when the Angel came and her Lord was at hand, she might be "full of grace," prepared as far as a creature could be prepared, to receive Him into her bosom.

I have drawn the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, as an immediate inference, from the primitive doctrine that Mary is the second Eve. The argument seems to me conclusive: and, if it has not been universally taken as such, this has come to pass, because there has not been a clear understanding among Catholics, what exactly was meant by the "Immaculate Conception." To many it seemed to imply that the Blessed Virgin did not die in Adam, that she did not come under the penalty of the fall, that she was

not redeemed, that she was conceived in some way inconsistent with the verse in the *Miserere* Psalm. If controversy had in earlier days so cleared the subject as to make it plain to all, that the doctrine meant nothing else than that in fact in her case the general sentence on mankind was not carried out, and that, by means of the indwelling in her of divine grace from the first moment of her being (and this is all the decree of 1854 has declared), I cannot believe that the doctrine would have ever been opposed; for an instinctive sentiment has led Christians jealously to put the Blessed Mary aside when sin comes into discussion. This is expressed in the well-known words of St. Augustine, All have sinned "except the Holy Virgin Mary, concerning whom, for the honour of the Lord, I wish no question to be raised at all, when we are treating of sins" (*de Nat. et Grat.* 42); words which, whatever was St. Augustine's actual occasion of using them (to which you refer, p. 176), certainly, in the spirit which they breathe, are well adapted to convey the notion, that, though her parents had no privilege beyond other parents, she had not personally any part in sin whatever. It is true that several great Fathers of the fourth century to imply or assert that on one or two occasions she did sin venially or showed infirmity. This is the only real objection which I know of; and as I do not wish to pass it over lightly, I propose to consider it at the end of this Letter.

Apparation of the Blessed Virgin to St. Pius V. Original painting in the Dominican College of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D. C.

CHAPTER VI

ST. THOMAS AND THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

The Immaculate Conception *

D. J. Kennedy, O. P., S. T. M.

The preceding chapters, especially the last two, have prepared our minds for the dogma which was solemnly proclaimed by Pope Pius IX, on December 8th, 1854, "We declare and pronounce and define that the doctrine which holds that the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted to her by Almighty God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of mankind, was preserved from all stain of original sin, is revealed by God, and consequently must be believed firmly and constantly by all the faithful" (Bull Ineffabilis Deus). This is the official declaration of Mary's Immaculate Conception. For centuries the Church had sung of Mary: "Tota Pulchra es, et macula non est in te—Thou art all fair, and there is not a spot in thee" (Cant. iv: 7), but the words of the Canticle could not have their fullest significance until it had been officially proclaimed that Mary was free, not only from all personal sin, but also from the slightest taint of original sin. To say that Mary was Immaculate in her conception is to say that her soul, from the very first instant of her existence, was entirely free from original sin; that it was never tainted by sin even for one moment. In making this declaration Pius IX did not reveal a new doctrine to the Church. The Popes have not the power or the authority to make new revelations; but, by the power of the Holy Ghost, promised and sent by the Saviour to teach the Church all truth, (John,

* From *Mary in the Theology of St. Thomas.*

xiv: 26; xvi: 13; Acts, ii: 1-4) they have the power to declare officially what is or is not contained in the deposit of revelation which comes down to us from the days of Christ and the Apostles. "The doctrine of faith, which God has revealed has not been proposed, like a philosophical invention, to be perfected by human ingenuity, but has been delivered as a divine deposit, to be faithfully kept and infallibly declared" (Vatican Council: On Faith and Reason, C. IV). Pius IX did not pretend to make a new revelation, but "having with sighs petitioned the Paraclete Spirit," he solemnly declared that the doctrine of Mary's Immaculate Conception had been revealed by God, "and *consequently* (italics ours) must be believed firmly and constantly by all the faithful."

This declaration and definition put an end to all doubts that might have remained in the minds of any Catholics inclined to admit the teaching of some old theologians who held that Mary was sanctified *before her birth, but not in the first instant of her conception.* The Supreme Pontiff declared that the Blessed Virgin was exempted from the general law in virtue of which all children of Adam are "by nature children of wrath" (Eph. ii: 3); and her exemption was a "singular grace and privilege," granted to Mary alone amongst all the children descending from Adam in the ordinary course of nature. In the case of Christ there could be no question of sin, since He was conceived not of man, but by the power of the Holy Ghost. Mary being a descendant of Adam in the ordinary course of nature, her soul should and would have been stained by original sin, had not the grace and favor of God prevented and preserved it; and this grace operated to make her sinless, not *after* she was conceived, but *in the very first instant of her conception.*

The Catholic world was ripe for this decision. The con-

troversy had long been settled; the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was almost universally accepted; to make it a dogma of faith nothing was lacking but a solemn declaration from the authority appointed by Christ to interpret His doctrine and His will. In the first ages of the Church, down to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, Mary's Immaculate Conception was implicitly believed by the faithful, together with other doctrines, parts of divine revelation, that had not been fully developed in their minds, or had not been explicitly proposed by the Church. Afterwards doubts were raised, and in the schools of theology there were controversies concerning Mary's great privilege. The controversies practically were at an end about the middle of the sixteenth century; the Catholic world awaited the proclamation of the dogma, to be followed by the explicit faith of all Catholics throughout the world. "All along," writes Pius IX in the Bull of Definition, "from times of old, bishops, ecclesiastics, the religious orders and even emperors and kings, have earnestly implored of this Holy See that the Immaculate Conception of the most Holy Mother of God might be defined as a dogma of the Catholic faith. In our own times these demands have been renewed, and they have been in an especial manner made on our predecessor, of happy memory, Gregory XVI, and on ourselves, both by bishops, by the secular and regular clergy, as well as by sovereign princes and the peoples professing the faith." The solemn proclamation of the dogma was one of the purest and sweetest joys vouchsafed to Pius IX during his long and eventful pontificate. The Most Reverend Dr. Dixon, Archbishop of Armagh, an eye-witness of the gorgeous and inspiring ceremonies in St. Peter's Rome, on the eighth of December, 1854, when the dogma was solemnly promulgated, tells us that, in reading the decree of definition, "His Holiness, who was ever remarkable for his devotion to the Holy

Virgin, overpowered as if by the sense of the favor which God was conferring on him, in vouchsafing that he should be the instrument of rendering such an honor to this most beloved Mother, burst into tears. He went on to read with a faltering voice, which betrayed the deepest emotion, the word "declaramus" but for some minutes could proceed no further. The effect on the vast audience may be more easily conceived than expressed. It may safely be said there were few present who were not profoundly moved, and many wept like children. The Pope having recovered from his emotion, finished the reading of the decree, and almost immediately after, the booming of the cannon of Fort San Angelo began to echo through the vast dome of St. Peter's and the bells of the churches throughout Rome rang a merry peal. The great act was consummated."

Now that the decision has been rendered, the doctrine universally understood and accepted, some may ask: Why did learned and saintly men, during the period of doubt and controversy hesitate and withhold their assent from a doctrine which agrees so admirably with all Catholic instincts relating to Jesus and His Mother? Two grave reasons are assigned to explain their hesitation. The doubts now are easily removed, but if we go back six or seven hundred years, and put ourselves in the situation of those who lived then, we shall find that it was not easy to dispose readily of objections that were urged with much sincerity and earnestness. There was, in the first place the sweeping declaration of St. Paul: "As by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned" (Rom. v:12). In this text we have the Catholic doctrine of original sin. Theologians are slow to assert special privileges. We know now that Catholic interpretation and tradition furnished grounds for exempting Mary from the law of sin: but, in charity to those who re-

ceived their reward ages ago, it may well be asked: How should we have answered the objection six or seven hundred years ago?

Then there was the doctrine of Christ's Redemption. If Mary was never under sin, it was urged, she did not need redemption, and therefore Christ was not her Redeemer. Many serious and saintly men failed to see that there was all the greater honor to Christ if, in virtue of His foreseen merits, Mary was exempted entirely from sin rather than freed and redeemed from sin contracted; and they doubted until the development of Christian doctrine made it clear that their fears for Christ's glory were unfounded.

THE OPINION OF ST. THOMAS

What was the attitude of St. Thomas in regard to the Immaculate Conception? On this point theologians are divided. Some say he opposed it; some say he affirmed it; others say he hesitated and doubted it, but it can not be shown that he professedly and explicitly rejects it. Without entering deeply into the intricacies of theological discussion and criticism, in which the faithful generally are not interested, the case may be stated in the following propositions:

1. From many passages of his works we know that he made it a rule to refrain from asserting special privileges of grace, unless they were clearly made known by revelation (see S. Th. 3, q. 1, A. 3; qu. 27, A. 6).

2. It must be admitted that the *obvious* meaning of some texts in the "Summa Theologica" (which was his last work) is contrary to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Lambruschini, who was alive in 1854, and many others held that there had been some tampering with the text by unscrupulous copyists and editors; and they brought forth ancient editions of the works of the Angelic Doctor, wherein

it is clearly stated that the Blessed Virgin was at all times free from sin, even original sin. Others denied there had been any alterations or interpolations; and they explained the ancient texts to mean that Mary was free from original sin before her birth, not that she was free from it from the first instant of the existence of her soul.

3. Although the latest works of St. Thomas, as we have them, do not clearly and explicitly affirm the Immaculate Conception, he lays down all the principles from which Catholic theologians deduced this doctrine. He declares that God's grace prepared Mary to be the Mother of God (see above Introd. and Chap. VI). With St. Anselm he declares that her purity was the greatest possible after that of Christ (S. Th. 3, q. 27, A. 2, ad 2). He says that "since we do not know what time the Blessed Virgin was sanctified,"—all admitting that it was before her birth—"the feast of her Sanctification rather than her Conception is celebrated on the day of her Conception" (Ibid., ad 3). Here St. Thomas wavers. "Although the Roman Church does not celebrate the conception of the Blessed Virgin, yet it tolerates the custom of certain churches that do keep that feast; wherefore this is not to be entirely reprobated" (ibid). He is explaining away more than approving the feast of the Conception; yet he does not think that it should be entirely reprobated, because the Roman Church tolerates the celebration. If the feast of the Conception had been kept in the churches of Rome in the time of St. Thomas, there would have been no doubt as to his opinion, for to him the practice of Rome was law and doctrine.

4. St. Thomas wrote at a time when the theories of conception and animation were far different from those that are proposed by many eminent biologists of our days. Had he merely stated that Mary's conception according to the flesh was in sin, that her flesh was tainted, the explanation

of his words would be easy. Many admirers hold that this is what he had in mind, i. e., the flesh would have infected the soul, had there not been intervention. Theologians call this being subject to the debt (debitum) of original sin, and subjection to this debt would have made redemption necessary. Certainly St. Thomas' argument proves no more than this, and, as Father Cornoldi, S. J., and others remark, it is reasonable to presume that the great Doctor wished to teach only what his argument proved. The most troublesome text of all is in question 27, article 2nd, Third Part of the Summa Theologica, because there St. Thomas seems to state clearly that the soul (not the flesh or foetus) of Mary must have contracted sin. We give the text of the article, adding a few remarks, and readers may draw their own conclusions. The question is: Whether the Blessed Virgin was sanctified before animation? "I answer that, the sanctification of the Blessed Virgin cannot be understood as having taken place before animation for two reasons. First, because the sanctification of which we are speaking, is nothing but the cleansing from original sin; for sanctification is a *perfect cleansing,* as Dionysius says (Div. Nom. 12). Now sin can not be taken away except by grace, the subject of which is the rational creature alone. Therefore before the infusion of the rational soul, the Blessed Virgin was not sanctified. Secondly, because, since the rational creature alone can be the subject of sin, before the infusion of the rational soul, the offspring conceived is not under sin. And thus, in whatever manner the Blessed Virgin would have been sanctified before animation, she could never have incurred the stain of original sin; and thus she would not have needed redemption and salvation which is by Christ, of whom it is written (Matt. i: 21): 'He shall save His people from their sins.' But this is unfitting through implying that Christ is not the Saviour of all men, as He is called (I Tim. iv:10).

It remains, therefore, that the Blessed Virgin was sanctified after animation."

The Angelic Doctor here undoubtedly teaches that the Blessed Virgin was not sanctified before animation (ante animationem), i. e., before she had a rational soul. To prove this he gives two reasons. First, because there can be no sanctification except by grace, and grace cannot be received except in a rational soul. Thus far there is no difficulty in explaining St. Thomas' words, because they do not necessarily imply that the soul of Mary existed before her sanctification by a *priority of time*. They may be interpreted as asserting what philosophers call a *priority of nature*, and the meaning will be simply this: There must be a soul before there can be a sanctified soul. Or, to use an example: The sun emits rays of light as soon as it begins to shine, yet the sun's existence must be presupposed (priority of nature) before the rays can be emitted, although both are *in the same moment of time*. In the same sense, the soul is presupposed before sanctification (priority of nature only) as the subject in which grace is received.[1]

The second reason adduced by St. Thomas presents a much more serious problem for those who hold that he did not oppose the Immaculate Conception. Only a rational soul, he says, is the subject of sin; if then, the Blessed Virgin were sanctified before her animation (the infusion of the rational soul), she would not have been subject to sin, and thus would not have needed redemption. If this is the genuine text of the article; and if the word "before" implies a priority of time; or if we do not admit the interpretation of John Bromyard, the Spaniard, John of St. Thomas, and Capponi, an Italian Dominican, who say that the

[1] On this article, see in Amer. Eccl. Review, vol. xxxi, Dec., 1904, p. 567, Card. Cajetan's commentary, cited by Fr. Hugh Pope, O. P., "The Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception and the Teaching of St. Thomas."

Angelic Doctor is not to be understood as speaking of original sin actually incurred by the Blessed Virgin, but simply of the *debt* of its criminality, which would have been *incurred* [2] if by a singular privilege she had not been preserved from it, then we must admit that he denied Mary's great privilege. He says that she could not have been sanctified *before her animation,* and he proves his assertion (first part of article). He does not state *explicitly* that the sanctification was *after* her animation, except in so far as his argument necessarily implies that, by a priority of nature (he does not say time), coming under the law of sin in some manner (e. g., under the *debt*) is presupposed to redemption, in the same sense in which the *sun is presupposed to its rays;* both can be in the same moment of time; one must precede the other by a priority of nature (see appendix 1).

This explanation calls for good will in interpreting St. Thomas' words, which will then mean: If we speak of actual sanctification, certainly a soul is presupposed; if we speak of redemption, there must be a soul in need of it, either because it has actually incurred guilt, or is subject to the debt of contracting guilt. There remains, however, a very grave doubt, because the clear-minded Doctor did not speak of preventive redemption; and he did not say explicitly: Mary was sanctified, not *before* animation, nor *after* animation, but *in the very instant in which* her soul was created. This probably was because the problem was not discussed in those terms in his days, and the Roman churches then did not celebrate the feast of Mary's Conception. Should we give the great Doctor the benefit of the doubt, and accept the explanations that have been offered? His great name and the signal services he has rendered to the Church entitle him to a friendly disposition, and we believe that, in admi-

[2] Some theologians went so far as to say that Mary was not subject even to the debt of original sin. St. Thomas certainly opposed that doctrine.

ration for his genius and in gratitude for his services, theologians are disposed to welcome the possibility of a favorable interpretation of his words. Doctrinal errors must not be readily ascribed to great names; obscurity of expressions should be overlooked, whenever favorable consideration is possible. If St. Thomas denied the Immaculate Conception of Mary, it was because he did not dare to assert such an extraordinary privilege before the Church had spoken on the subject. He is not the only Saint and Doctor who wrote in language that seems obscure or inaccurate to those who live in the noonday of revelation fully developed and understood.

In the course of ages we find that learned and saintly men sometimes have opposed doctrines which afterwards were defined by the Church. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries there were many learned and holy men, including St. Bernard and St. Bonaventure, who, like St. Thomas, neither denied the Immaculate Conception or at least failed to formulate and affirm it. (See Pohle-Preuss, Mariology, St. Louis, 1914, pp. 68, 69.)

Granting that St. Thomas erred, he would still be the great Angelic Doctor, and his error would serve to show more clearly that the Church of God is not dependent on the services of any one theologian, be he a St. Augustine or a St. Thomas.

The doctrine afterwards was opposed by a number of theologians. Many of these were of the Order of St. Dominic, brethren of St. Thomas, who thought that in this they were correctly interpreting his mind. It is not true, however, as some have recklessly asserted, that the Order of St. Dominic, as a body, combated the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Those who desire to know the facts relating to this question, can find them in books treating the subject, e. g., in Bishop Ullathorne's "Immaculate

Conception," p. 144; and in "Tractatus de Beata Virgine Maria," of Father Lepicier, Professor of Theology in the Propaganda (P. II, Cap. 1, Art. 1, n. 19, pp. 119-120).

There is a very ancient tradition that the book which St. Dominic cast into the fire, as a test of his teaching against the Albigensians, and which was miraculously preserved from the flames, contained a defense of the Immaculate Conception. Father Pacifici, a Franciscan, declares that twenty-one thousand Dominicans, in taking their degrees at the University of Paris, pledged themselves to defend this privilege of Mary. At the Council of Trent, in the sixteenth century, twenty-five Dominican Bishops signed a petition for the definition of the dogma. Father Rouard de Card, who succeeded Father Lacordaire as Provincial of the Dominicans in Belgium, enumerated ten thousand professors of the Order who taught that Mary was conceived without sin. St. Vincent Ferrer defended the true doctrine, as did Father Dominic Soto, one of the most distinguished theologians of the Council of Trent, and in this they have been followed by all Spanish members of the Order. As early as the year 1356 there existed Confraternities of the Immaculate Conception, attached to the Dominican churches in Naples, Seville, Brussels and elsewhere. Some theologians who held high positions in the Order were opposed to the doctrine, and thus it came about that the opinions of a few were spread abroad as the sentiments of the entire religious body.

Whatever the past may have been, there are not to be found in the world today more ardent admirers and defenders of Mary's Immaculate Conception than the brethren of St. Thomas. In the year 1904, the Jubilee year of the Dogma, the Dominicans of the United States dedicated to Mary their House of Studies in Washington, the College

of the Immaculate Conception, which will ever stand near Mary's great National Shrine, soon to be erected on the grounds of the Catholic University of America.

Immaculate Conception—Dun Scotus, from painting in Crypt of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Catholic University, Washington, D. C.

CHAPTER VII

THE TEACHING OF VEN. JOHN DUNS SCOTUS CONCERNING THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF OUR LADY *

Scotus' Defence of the Immaculate Conception

VINCENT MAYER, O. M. C.

The present sketch does not attempt to offer an exhaustive account of the doctrine of the Subtle Doctor concerning the Immaculate Conception. As a matter of fact, Scotus never intended to adduce stringent arguments and proofs for the Immaculate Conception, since the belief in Our Lady's sinlessness and her freedom from original sin was in his time sufficiently established. What he was chiefly concerned with, was to remove those difficulties which prevented the scientifico-theological acceptance of this belief. That Scotus succeeded in his object is beyond all doubt. It is hoped that these few pages may to some extent at least show how he accomplished his purpose.

Toward the end of the thirteenth century the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady seemed to have suffered a backset. (Cfr. Koesters, S. J., *Maria die unbefleckt Empfangene,* p. 104.) From a theological standpoint the doctrine was still faced with several serious difficulties or objections. Even the great Aquinas had been unable to dispose of them. Those theologians, therefore, who opposed the doctrine were thus excusable and perchance their opposition was instrumental in preventing the enthusiasm of the other school from developing into fantastic extremes with regard to this beautiful privilege of the Mother of God.

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* From *Franciscan Studies,* April, 1926.

The belief in the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady was by no means stifled by the opposition of the theologians. It was but a question of time before this doctrine would assert itself with perfect assurance. The theological difficulties which stood in its way were apparently serious enough, but not insurmountable. The happy solution was found by John Duns Scotus, the learned Franciscan Friar, whose keenness of intellect earned for him the title "Doctor Subtilis."

Schwabe, in his *History of Dogma,* vol. IV, p. 178, says of Scotus, that this theologian rendered his greatest service when he stood forth as the standard-bearer in the defence and establishment of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, inasmuch as he proposed the correct solution of the apparent difficulties against it. Let us see how well-founded is this praise.

Reconciling Two Doctrines

Before the days of Duns Scotus even the greatest minds seemed nonplussed by the difficulty of reconciling a dogma of the Church with the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God. (We may, perhaps, except St. Augustine, who by urging the doctrine of the *fullness* of grace in Mary may have implied that this fullness of grace excluded or expelled original sin.) The dogma which caused the difficulty was the accepted teaching of the Church concerning the universal need of Redemption, for in Adam we have all sinned (Rom. V.) Scotus removed the misgivings of theologians by solving the apparent contradiction between this established and accepted dogma and the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary.

Scotus treats this difficulty in *Quaestiones in Lib. III Sent.,* d. III., quaest. 1. "Utrum Beata Virgo fuerit concepta in originali peccato?" He himself states the objections very

clearly and fairly: 1) In Adamo omnes peccaverunt, quia in eo fuerunt secundum rationem seminalem; ita fuit in eo Beata Virgo. Igitur, etc. 2) Damascenus, *de Fide Orthodoxa,* dicit: Spiritus Sanctus purgavit eam; purgatio autem non est nisi a peccato; igitur habuit peccatum, non actuale, igitur, etc. 3) Augustinus, *de Fide ad Petrum:* Firmissime tene et nullatenus dubites omnem qui per concubitum viri et mulieris concipitur, cum peccato originali nasci. (Scotus remarks that Augustine excepts the Mother of God, and develops a text to this effect.) Scotus expresses the difficulty again (D. III. quaest. 1. n. 14.) in this wise: "Quod quilibet filius Adae naturaliter est debitor iustitiae originalis, et ex demerito Adae caret ea, et ideo omnis talis habet unde contrahat peccatum originale." These texts fairly express the objections which had baffled the theologians.

The solution offered by the Franciscan Friar is this: While accepting the sentence that every descendant of Adam by reason of the sin of Adam lacks original justice, he proceeds to say: "si alicui in primo instanti creationis animae detur gratia, ille licet careat iustitia originali, numquam tamen est debitor eius, quia merito alterius *praevenientis* peccatum datur sibi gratia quae aequivalet illi iustitiae quantum ad acceptationem divinam, imo excedit; ergo quantum est ex se, quilibet haberet peccatum originale, nisi alius praeveniret merendo."

Therefore, according to Scotus, at the very moment of conception there was given to Our Lady, through the merits of the Redeeemer, a grace like unto original justice, in fact surpassing it.

Scotus repeats this doctrine in *Quaest. in Lib III,* d. III, quaest. 1., n. 9.: "Potuit enim Deus in primo instanti illius animae infundere sibi gratiam tantam, quantam alii animae

in circumcisione vel baptismo; igitur in illo instanti anima non habuisset peccatum originale, sicut nec habuisset si postea fuisset baptizata."

The teaching of the Church declaring the universal "sinfulness" of the descendants of Adam is upheld, because Scotus ascribes also to Mary the lack of original justice, but this only *natura prius quam infusio illius gratiae praecaventis.* Now that which is said to be *natura prius,* as Scotus explains, is not actually present, because at the same time its opposite is present; "quod dicitur prius natura non inest, quia in eodem instanti oppositum inest; sed dicitur prius natura quia tunc inesset quantum est ex parte subjecti, nisi aliquid extrinsecum impediret." (Dist. III, quaest. 1., n. 15.) This "aliquid extrinsecum impediens" is the mediation of Christ, the Redeemer.

Thus did Scotus also solve the other difficulty which had been found in the accepted teaching of theologians and which the Subtle Doctor states in L. III, d. III, q. 1., schol. 3.: "Ipse (Christus) enim ut Redemptor universalis omnibus ianuam aperuit; sed si Beata Virgo non contraxisset peccatum originale, non indiguisset redemptore, . . . non enim clauditur (ianua) nisi propter peccatum, et maxime originale." The great Franciscan points out that Our Lady had need of the Redeemer even in a greater degree than the rest of the descendants of Adam. Mary by reason of her common descent from Adam ("ex ratione propagationis communis") would have contracted the original stain, if this had not been prevented by the grace of the Mediator Christ Jesus. Since the rest of mankind stood in need of Christ, so that through His merits there might be remitted the sin which they had already incurred, so much the more did Our Lady require the intervention of the Redeemer to save her from incurring this

original sin. "Ita illa magis indiguit mediatore praeveniente, peccatum ne esset ab ipsa aliquando contrahendum, et ne ipsa contraheret." (In L. III, d. III, q. 1. n. 14.)

As we have here the real crux of the question it may be advisable to quote both the difficulty and its solution at greater length. We find it in *L. III.* d. 3. q. 1. scholium n, 15, "Et si arguas quia prius naturaliter fuit (Maria) filia Adæ, quia prius fuit persona quam habens gratiam; in illo igitur priori tenebatur ad iustitiam originalem quia naturalis filia Adæ, et non habuit eam; ergo in illo priori contraxit originale peccatum." In solving this objection Scotus makes the distinction we quoted above, namely that Our Lady was only *natura prius filia Adae quam habens illam gratiam praecaventem,* and we have seen that this does not imply any actual or real precedence. Scotus offers an illustration. "Si materia comparatur ad formam et ad privationem (formae), prius naturaliter est materia non habens formam, non quod in illo instanti in quo habet formam, realiter non habeat eam, quia tunc contradictoria essent simul; sed quia tunc materia quantum est ex se, dimissa sibi, non haberet formam, si alium habens non daret." Thus though matter naturally is lacking form before it is formed, it does not follow that actually matter ever exists without form. Scotus then goes on to say that, although matter may be considered to be by nature something in itself before it is either lacking form or having form, it does not follow that matter ever actually exists in this wise: "Non tamen sequitur quod ipsa (materia) aliquando sit in se, ita quod nec sub privatione nec sub forma." The great theologian then makes the application to the problem in question: "Ita in proposito dico quod natura animae praecedit naturaliter iustitiam originalem sive gratiam aequivalentem et carentiam iustitiae debitae, et etiam in

illa natura praecedit naturaliter carentia illa iustitae originalis illam institiam, quia quantum est ex subjecto quod est prius naturaliter utroque opposito (i. e. privationi et formae nempe gratiae), prius naturaliter privatio inesset, tamen non oportet animam esse aliquando sub neutro extremo, neque prius esse sub privatione quam sub opposito."

The further application follows very naturally. Mary was ("natura prius") a daughter of Adam by nature before she was justified; consequently before she possessed the grace of original justice. It does not, however follow, that in that instant she was actually deprived of original justice: "Non sequitur ergo in illo instanti naturae fuit privata, loquendo de omnino primo instanti, quia secundum illam primitiam, natura animae ita naturaliter praecessit privationem iustitiae, sicut ipsam iustitiam." Scotus says we have but the right to infer that in considering the nature (of Mary), which is the source and foundation of her descent from Adam, there is included in it neither original justice, nor its want. Consequently, since all these precedences are merely speculative, theoretical, "ratione et natura," Scotus declares there is no real difficulty in the opinion of those who say that Our Lady was first of all a daughter of Adam and then freed from the lack of original justice, for being *natura* a daughter of Adam and *ratione naturae* lacking original justice do not constitute an *actual* moment before the granting to her of original justice through the merits of the Redeemer.

Even the ordinary mind realizes in this conclusion the doctrine which now seems to us so clear and simple, but which was until the days of Scotus an unsolved difficulty. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, was by nature subject to the universal law or curse of original sin. But by a special privilege, granted to her through the (foreseen) merits of the Redeemer who would be born of her, Mary was pre-

served from actually incurring the stain. Christ was also her Redeemer, for He it was Who, by His merits, brought it about that Mary in the very moment of her conception was granted the grace which was equal, or even superior to original justice, the lack of which constitutes original sin.

Further Reasons in Support of Scotus' View

It may be of interest to add a few more reasons which Scotus gives in support of his teaching (In *Lib. III,* d. III, q. 1. n. 4.). It can be argued, says Scotus, from the very transcendent superiority of her Son, considered as the Redeemer, Reconciler and Mediator, that Mary did not incur original sin. The most perfect mediator has a perfect act of mediation in respect of some person to whom he is a mediator; now Christ is the perfect mediator; therefore Christ must have the highest possible degree of mediation towards some person, with regard to whom He is mediator. However, to none did Christ stand in a higher degree as mediator than to His Mother. Now this would not be realized if He had not merited for her this preservation from original sin.

Scotus argues here from the premises that Christ is the most perfect mediator. It is not our purpose to give his reasons, as it is not our intention to subject the teaching of Scotus to a critical examination, but merely to set forth his doctrine concerning the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God. Scotus probably takes into consideration the divine nature of Christ. That Scotus does not declare the manner of our redemption to be the most perfect way possible is clear from the following. Scotus gives it as his opinion that as Christ is the most perfect mediator, He had it in power to apply the most perfect mediation. The most perfect degree of mediation consists in that Christ should

not only free someone from sin, but that he should preserve at least one person from sin.

This opinion is explained further by an example, which is very similar to an illustration found in St. Anselm, *Cur Deus homo,* 1. 2. A certain man had offended the king to such an extent that the king made not only the offender but also his children feel the royal displeasure, and dispossessed them all. The punishment would be remitted only if an innocent person rendered to the king a service which would be considered graeter than the offense committed. Now a mediator succeeds to the extent that the king will no longer deprive the children of the offender of their inheritance, yet leaves them under his displeasure, though later on he forgives them for the sake of the merits of that mediator. Now, says Scotus, if this mediator could so appease the king, that he could prevent any offence being taken by the king in respect to some particular child of the original offender, the mediator would be far more excellent than to induce the king to forgive after taking offence. And this, says our Doctor Subtilis, is not at all impossible, since the offence given by this individual is not through his own fault, but through an inherited one. It will be best to give the very words of Scotus: "Nullus ergo summe vel perfectissime placat aliquem pro offensa alicuius contrahenda nisi posset praevenire, ne ille offendatur, nam si iam offensum placat, ut remittat, non perfectissime placat. Igitur Christus non perfectissime placat Trinitatem pro culpa contrahenda a filiis Adae, si non praevenit, ut alicuius filii Adae non habeat culpam talem." (In *L. III,* d. III, q. 1. n. 5.) For if there is sin, the Trinity must necessarily be offended.

This explanation is rightly applied to Our Lady, since Scotus expressly treats of the Immaculate Conception in this portion of his teaching.

Christ as the perfect mediator possessed the power to preserve a descendant, or the descendants of Adam from original sin. It was befitting that He should exercise this power in at least one case, just as it behooved God to give at least one manifestation of His Omnipotence, and which He gave in the creation of the world *ex nihilo*.

We may add that it seemed right and meet to preserve Our Lady from incurring original sin, so that no link in the chain of this particular mediation be missing. The descendants of Adam are generally cleansed from original sin after their birth. A few, like St. John the Baptist, were sanctified and cleansed in their mother's womb. Christ, the God-man, was *a priori* free from original sin, and thus it was befitting that a child of Adam, who by its nature would have incurred the original stain, should by virtue of the merits of the Redeemer be preserved from that stain. Scotus himself does not elaborate the conclusion that Christ should extend this most perfect form of mediation to Our Lady, no doubt because the reason in favor of Our Lady seemed so conclusive that he presumed no one would doubt it. Scotus therefore simply asserts the conclusion without giving proofs.

There is no purpose in giving the reasons why it behooved that this privilege be given to Our Lady in preference to any one else. These reasons are too well known to need repetition. It may, however, be of interest to consider a few more reasons given by Scotus why it behooved the Redeemer to preserve at least one descendant of Adam from original sin: "Primo, quia perfectissimus mediator meretur amotionem omnis poenae ab eo quem reconciliat; sed culpa originalis est maior poena quam ipsa carentia visionis divinae." (Crf. In *Lib. II,* d. 36.) Sin, says Scotus, is the greatest affliction or punishment of an intelligent being. It is moreover argued, he continues, that

Christ seemed to be more directly (*immediatius*) our Redeemer with regard to original sin than actual sin. Yet it is generally assumed that Christ was a perfect Mediator with regard to one person (*puta Mariam*) to such a degree that He preserved her from all actual sin; therefore, in like manner from original sin. This may suffice to demonstrate the teaching of Duns Scotus concerning the Immaculate Conception.

In conclusion it might be remarked that to some minds it may appear a very natural thing that Scotus should be found teaching the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception with such assurance in contrast with his predecessors. It is often assumed that Scotus is the deliberate opponent of St. Thomas. Such an assumption would be false. Scotus did not follow a deliberate tendency to differ from the great Dominican. The natural intellectual acuteness of the Franciscan Theologian brought in its train a certain independence of spirit, and these two qualities led him to seek new and original trains of thought, which happily led to original and true conclusions. Scotus never mentions St. Thomas even when he opposes opinions held and defended by the Angelic Doctor. Hurter, in his *Nomenclator,* II, col, 363, says of Scotus, that he went aside from the older theologians, such as Thomas, Richard of St. Victor, etc., "quia sagacissimi ingenii erat, sed absque studio et ira, tranquille et solius veritatis inquirendae vel determinandae ratione habita."

Orthodoxy of the Subtle Doctor

A Franciscan may be pardoned for adding that it is not dangerous to follow John Duns Scotus despite the fact that the Doctor Subtilis does not always agree with the great Angelic Doctor. A Roman Congregation by order of Paul V declared "immunem esse a censuris doctrinam Scoti," and

ordered that none dare refuse permission to print whatever "certo constaret ex Scoto depromptum esse." (Cfr. Hurter, l. c.)

But in the particular matter of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception the Jesuit Koesters has justly said (*Maria, die unbefleckt Empfangene,* p. 104): "It is the enduring achievement of the great Franciscan John Duns Scotus that he dispelled the hard frost of theological misgivings, and thus brought it about that the bud of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, which was even then perfectly formed, should open up and disclose its wondrous beauty."

PIUS IX

Copy of original oil painting formerly in possession of the Bishop of Cork, Ireland, now in the Mariana Library, National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

CHAPTER VIII

THE VOICE OF THE HOLY SEE *

ARCHBISHOP ULLATHORNE

We have now to hear the voice of the supreme pastor of Christ's flock, who sits in the apostolic Chair. We have to listen to that Head and Mother of all Churches, on which, as Tertullian says, "the apostles poured out all their doctrine with their blood";[1] and to which it is needful that all the Church should come, to receive from thence the form of sound words and the seal of every doctrine. We have to give our attentive ears to that Roman Church, "the place of Peter, the principal, the ruling Church, the root and matrix of the Catholic Church," as St. Cyprian styles the Holy See.[2] For to Peter our Lord said: "I have prayed that thy faith may not fail: feed My sheep: confirm thy brethren." [3]

From the first raising of the controversy to the solemn moment at which the doctrine was defined, the conduct of the Holy See exhibits a most beautiful instance of that wisdom, forebearance, delicacy and firmness which are the abiding characteristics of the Sovereign Pontiffs. From first to last their acts concerning the belief of the Immaculate Conception and the devotion of which it is the object, though extending over nearly four centuries, exhibit a consistency and unity of purpose such as might have emanated from some one perspicacious mind. No matter from what school or from what religious Order a pontiff was raised to the chair of Peter, he was still found extending favour and protection to the sublime privilege of Mary.

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* Ullathorne— *The Immaculate Conception.*

[1] Tertullian adv. Marc. iv, c. 5.

[2] Ep. 45 ad Corn de Poly. Had., and Ep. 55 and Corn. de Fort. et Fel.

[3] Luke xxii, 32, and John xxi, 17.

From the decree of Sixtus IV in 1476, to the present day three-and-thirty pontiffs, including every pope whose reign was not too brief for many acts of authority, have issued constitutions either directly or indirectly favouring the doctrine or extending encouragement to the devotion of the Immaculate Conception. These papal constitutions before the close of the reign of Pius VI had reached the number of seventy.[4]

Towards the close of the fourteenth century, probably under Nicholas III, the feast of the Conception began to be celebrated in Rome.[5]

It was after Bandello of Castelnuovo had published the work in which he declared the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception to be heretical that, to remedy the scandal it occasioned, Sixtus IV granted to the faithful who should assist at a mass and office approved by him, which directly affirmed the Immaculate Conception, the same indulgences which his predecessors had granted for the mass and office of the Most Blessed Sacrament.[6] But as this was not enough to repress the boldness of the opponents, the pope issued another decree in which he strongly reprobated the conduct of those who dared to affirm that the Roman Church celebrated the spiritual Conception or sanctification only, and not the real Conception of the Blessed Virgin. He excommunicated those who affirmed that it was heretical to maintain that Mary was conceived without sin. And he designated the authors of such opinions as rash, perverse and scandalous. But, as the doctrine was not yet defined, he equally and with like censure forbade the contrary opinion to be held up as heretical.[7]

Innocent VIII, at the request of Elizabeth the pious queen

[4] For a list of these Constitutions see Passaglia, vol. III, sec. 7, c. 1, art. 3.
[5] Passaglia, l.c.
[6] Cum praeexcelsa, A. D. 1476, Mansi, xxxii, 373.
[7] Grave nimis, A. D. 1483. Mansi, xxxii, 374.

of Castille, established a religious community under the invocation of the Conception, and assigned them a blue habit as a symbol of the immaculate purity of the Queen of heaven.[8]

Leo X not only confirmed the office of the Immaculate Conception approved by Sixtus IV, but gave the privileges of a jubilee on the festival to seven of the Roman Churches.[9]

Adrian VI confirmed a confraternity in honour of the Immaculate Conception at Toledo, of which the emperor Charles V was the first brother.[10]

Pius IV confirmed the Council of Trent, in which it is declared that the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin Mary was not included in what was there defined respecting original sin.[11]

As the publication of a corrected Breviary and Missal for the use of the whole Latin Church had been left by the Council to the Sovereign Pontiff, Pius V accomplished this great work.[12] Hitherto several different offices of the Conception had been used in various parts of the Church,[13] though that of Nogarolis, so called from its author, had been sanctioned, and had come into use in the Roman and some other Churches. This office directly affirmed the Immaculate Conception. But as an office was now required for the use of the universal Church, and as an injunction to adopt that particular office universally would have been equivalent to a definition, it was superseded by the one which writers have often called the office of Helsinus, as having originated through him, and already in use in various Churches. The

[8] Inter innumera, May, 1489.

[9] Ad ea, June, 1515; Super gregem, May, 1517; Pia Christi, February, 1518; Quia nuper, February, 1519; Ineffabilia, March, 1521.

[10] Romanus Pontifex, July, 1522.

[11] Benedictus Deus, Jan., 1564.

[12] Quod a nobis, July, 1568.

[13] There were at least five offices in use, those of Nogarolis, of Bernard de Bustis, of Quignonez, of Robert Gagnini and of Helsinus.

office of the Nativity was adopted with the substitution of the word "Conception" for that of "Nativity." And thus the feast became universally extended, whilst the mystery was still designated in the office as the "Holy Conception" and the "most worthy Conception." To the Franciscans the Pope confirmed the use of the office of Nogarolis. Pius V also condemned the 73rd proposition of Baius, which maintained that "No one except Christ is without original sin; that hence the Blessed Virgin died because of the sin contracted in Adam, and all her afflictions in this life, as of the other just, were the penalties of actual or original sin." And to stop the controversial preaching and the publication of controversial writings which were often rash and occasions of scandal to the faithful, Pius V imposed silence on both sides in so far as the use of modern languages were concerned, until the question should be decided by the Holy See. He also confirmed the decrees of Sixtus IV. Such were the protective acts exercised towards the pious belief by a Dominican Pope, trained in the school of St. Thomas.

Sixtus V, in his constitution "Ineffabilis," 1568, called the mystery "the most pure Conception."

Clement VIII raised the feast to the rank of a double major festival throughout the Church[14] and confirmed the acts of his predecessors. He also approved the Catechism of Bellarmin, which expressly teaches that "Our Lady is full of grace, for she was never attainted with the stain of any sin, either original or actual, mortal or venial."[15]

Paul V, considering that "the opinion which asserted that the Blessed Virgin was conceived in original sin gave rise to great offences against God, scandals and tumults," forbade that opinion to be publicly maintained in any manner.[16]

[14] Ben. XIV, de Festis B. V. M., n. 207.
[15] Pastoralis, July, 1599, Bell. Cat. c. 5.
[16] Regis pacifici, June, 1616.

Gregory XV, to put a stop to the same scandals, prohibited even private discourses against the pious belief. And, as one religious Order had continued to use in their office the word "Sanctification" he enjoined that the word "Conception" should be everywhere adopted.[17]

Alexander VII declared it to be the ancient sentiment of the faithful that the most Blessed Virgin, by special grace and privilege, and in view of the merits of her Son, was preserved exempt from original sin, and this at the moment of her soul's creation and of its infusion into the body, and that almost all Catholics embraced this sentiment; and that it was in this sense that the Church celebrated the festival of the Conception with her solemn rites.[18]

Benedict XIV addressed an encyclical letter to all the patriarchs, primates, archbishops and bishops of the Church, in which, recalling to mind the approval which Clement VIII had given to the Catechism of Bellarmin, that catechism in which the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is so explicitly affirmed, he urged his brethren in the episcopacy in the most vivid language to adopt it for the instruction of their people.[19]

Everything had now been done short of an actual and formal decision, and the implicit faith of the Church had everywhere come out into explicit expression; and during the pontificate of Gregory XVI the bishops, the religious Orders and the other great institutions of the Church were petitioning the Holy See from every quarter and urging for a final definition. This ardent, this vehement desire became yet more widely manifested when the present pontiff Pius IX ascended the Chair of Peter.

Moved by so many entreaties, and by his own veneration and love towards the Mother of God, says an authentic

[17] Sanctissimus Dominus noster, May, 1622.
[18] Sollicitudo omnium Ecclesiarum, Dec., 1661.
[19] Etsi minime, Feb., 1742.

document,[20] Pius IX, at the commencement of his pontificate confided to twenty of the most eminent theologians taken from the secular and regular clergy the commission of studying the question of the Immaculate Conception with the greatest care, and of stating their opinions in writing. For the same object he also instituted a commission of cardinals to the number of two-and-twenty of that illustrious body.

Forced by well-known events to remove from his see, the holy pontiff issued from Gaeta that Encyclical Letter in which he demanded of the bishops of the Catholic world that they should, in the most clear and explicit terms, make known what was the piety of their faithful diocesans towards the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God, and what above all was their own opinion and desire; and invited them to order public prayers to God, that He would deign to shed upon them the light of His Holy Spirit.

The theological consultors went on with their labours, and from the development of holy Scripture, the testimony of Fathers, tradition, the acts of the Church, and the sovereign pontiffs, as also from the well-known declaration of the Council of Trent in its decree relative to original sin, they came to the conclusion that the Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God could be defined, and that the definition was opportune.

In the meantime, knowing perfectly the gravity of the question, and ardently desiring to proceed with all the maturity possible, says the document which I am continuing to quote, the sovereign pontiff judged that he should spare no pains and omit no counsel that might be taken, in order that the question might be examined under every aspect and in all its bearings, and that with the greatest and

[20] Narratio Actorum Sanctissimi Domini Nostri Pii IX, Pont. Max. super argumento de immaculato Deiparae Virginis Conceptu. Published at Rome by order of the Sovereign Pontiff.

most scrupulous care. After he returned to the city, he therefore appointed a special commission, composed of a select number of the same theologians, under the presidency of the late learned and illustrious Cardinal Fornari. That special commission held many sittings in the course of the years 1852 and 1853, in which it weighed anew and with the utmost exactness and care the arguments from all the sources above enumerated, calculated to demonstrate the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mother of God, and to resolve all the difficulties that had at any time been raised against it. They finally drew up a summary of their labours, which was unanimously approved both by the theologians who formed the commission, and by the cardinal who presided over it. They then demanded the opinion of a particular Council of Cardinals, to the number of twenty-one, who having assembled together, after a searching and thorough examination of all things, judged in their wisdom that it was possible and fitting to define the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of the most glorious Virgin.

In the meantime those six hundred and three replies from bishops were received from time to time, according to the distance of the country from which they were written. And, by order of the Sovereign Pontiff, these replies were printed in nine volumes with an appendix, with which were also included letters from ecclesiastical bodies, religious orders, sovereigns, municipal corporations and other associations, humbly petitioning for the declaration of the doctrine. Sundry able treatises, written with the same view, were also added to this voluminous collection.

From this summary statement of the facts every person can easily comprehend what care and mature deliberation the Sovereign Pontiff has employed in the examination of this question; what eagerness the Catholic Episcopate has testified for the definition, and what ardent piety the faith-

ful of the entire world has confessed for the holy mystery which is its object.

After all these preparations, and after sacrifices and prayers had been offered up from every part of the earth, his Holiness invited a certain number of prelates from each country to Rome, as representatives of the hierarchy, whilst he expressed his readiness to welcome as many other bishops as could conveniently come. A hundred and fifty archbishops and bishops responded to the call, among which number were representatives of many of the most ancient and illustrious sees and hierarchies in the world. There were others who represented hierarchies that had been either revived or established in our own day. From Asia and the East to North America and the far West, from the shores of the Baltic to Australia and the Isles of the great Pacific, the Church was there in her chief pastors assembled around the supreme head of the Church and the chair of Catholic unity.

On four several days this venerable assemblage of bishops met, under the presidency of three distinguished and learned cardinals, and the papal bull, drawn up and prepared for its final revision, was laid before them, and every part of it was freely discussed.

After the episcopal deliberations on the form of this momentous document were concluded, the Pope conferred upon it in secret consistory with his cardinals, who constitute his own especial counsel.

All was now ready. On December 8, the festival of the Immaculate Conception, in the ever-memorable year 1854, during the celebration of a solemn Mass which the Supreme Pontiff offered up, surrounded by a hundred and fifty-two mitred bishops, fifty-three cardinals, more than two hundred prelates of an inferior order, a vast body of clergy from many countries, and some thirty or forty thousand

people, who crowded the vast basilica of St. Peter's; Cardinal Macchi, the dean of the Sacred College, advanced to the Pontifical throne, accompanied by an archbishop of the Greek rite, and an archbishop of the Armenian rite, and by twelve of the senior archbishops of the Western Church, as witnesses and supporters, and addressed to the Pope these words:

"For a long time, Most Blessed Father, has the Catholic Church most ardently wished and entreated with all her desires that, in your supreme and infallible judgment, you would define the Immaculate Conception of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, Mother of God, for the increase of her praise, glory and veneration. In the name of the Sacred College of Cardinals, of the bishops of the Catholic world, and of all the faithful, we humbly and earnestly entreat of you that, on this solemnity of the Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin, our common vows may be fulfilled.

"In the midst, then, of this oblation of the august and unbloody Sacrifice, in this temple, sacred to the Prince of the Apostles, surrounded by this solemn assemblage of the Sacred College, the bishops and the people, deign, Most Blessed Father, to lift up your apostolic voice, and to pronounce the dogmatic decree of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, at which there will be joy in heaven and great exultation on the earth."

To these words the Pontiff answered that he willingly received the prayers of the Sacred College, the bishops and the people, but that they might be heard it was necessary to invoke the Holy Ghost. Then the *Veni Creator Spiritus* was intoned and taken up by the immense assemblage of the people. And after the sublime supplication, thundered from thirty thousand voices, had died away, there was a breathless silence, and the Pope, most deeply moved, and with his face bathed in tears, read to that silent but agitated assembly the

decree of the Immaculate Conception, and solemnly defined that:

"IT IS A DOGMA OF FAITH THAT THE MOST BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, IN THE FIRST INSTANT OF HER CONCEPTION, BY A SINGULAR PRIVILEGE AND GRACE OF GOD, IN VIRTUE OF THE MERITS OF JESUS CHRIST THE SAVIOUR OF THE HUMAN RACE, WAS PRESERVED EXEMPT FROM ALL STAIN OF ORIGINAL SIN."[21]

Such is the solemn definition for which so many prayers and entreaties had been sent to Rome, and for which the whole Catholic episcopacy had been interrogated. And such is the wisdom, patience, care, diligence, deliberation, attention to the sentiments of the Episcopacy, and even of the people of the Catholic world, the ripeness of counsel and the earnestness of prayer with which the Holy See proceeds before defining a doctrine.

[21] Ineffabilis Deus, December 8, 1854.

Apparition of the Blessed Virgin to Catharine Labouré in Rue du Bac, Paris, Novitiate of the Sisters of Charity

CHAPTER IX

ST. ALPHONSUS ON THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Discourse on Mary's Immaculate Conception

Translated from the Italian of

St. Alphonsus de Liguori

Founder of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

HOW BECOMING IT WAS THAT EACH OF THE THREE DIVINE PERSONS SHOULD PRESERVE MARY FROM ORIGINAL SIN.

Great indeed was the injury entailed on Adam and all his posterity by his accursed sin; for at the same time that he thereby, for his own great misfortune, lost grace, he also forfeited all the other precious gifts with which he had originally been enriched, and drew down upon himself and all his descendants, the hatred of God, and an accumulation of evils. But from this general misfortune, God was pleased to exempt that Blessed Virgin, whom He had destined to be the Mother of the Second Adam—Jesus Christ—who was to repair the evil done by the first. Now, let us see how becoming it was that God, and all the three Divine Persons should thus preserve her from it; that the Father should preserve her as His Daughter, the Son as His Mother, and the Holy Ghost as His Spouse.

First point.—In the first place it was becoming that the eternal Father should preserve Mary from the stain of original sin, because she was His daughter, and His first-born daughter, as she herself declares: "I came out of the mouth of the Most High, the first-born before all creatures."[1] For this text is applied to Mary by sacred interpreters, the holy Fathers, and by the Church, on the solemnity of her Concep-

[1] Ergo ex ore Altissimi prodivi, primogenita ante omnem creaturam.—*Eccl.* xxiv, 5.

tion. For be she the first-born, inasmuch as she was predestined in the Divine decrees, together with the Son, before all creatures, according to the Scotists; or be she the first-born of grace as the predestined Mother of the Redeemer, after the prevision of sin, according to the Thomists, nevertheless all agree in calling her the first-born of God. This being the case, it was quite becoming that Mary should never have been the slave of Lucifer, but only, and always, possessed by her Creator; and this she in reality was, as we are assured by herself: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways."[2] Hence Denis of Alexandria rightly calls Mary "the one and only daughter of life."[3] She is the one and only daughter of life, in contradistinction to others who, being born in sin, are daughters of death.

Besides this, it was quite becoming that the Eternal Father should create her in His grace, since He destined her to be the repairer of the lost world and the mediatrix of peace between men and God; and as such, she is looked upon and spoken of by the holy fathers, and in particular by Saint John Damascene, who thus addresses her; "O Blessed Virgin, thou wast born that thou mightest minister to the salvation of the whole world."[4] For this reason Saint Bernard says, "that Noah's ark was a type of Mary; for as, by its means, men were preserved from the deluge, so are we all saved by Mary from the shipwreck of sin; but with the difference, that in the ark few were saved, and by Mary the whole human race was rescued from death."[5] Therefore, in a sermon found amongst the works of Saint Athanasius, she

[2] Dominus possedit me in initio viarum suarum.—*Prov.* viii, 22.

[3] Una. . . et sola virgo, filia vitæ.—*Epist. Compresbyteri Eccles. Alexand.*

[4] O desiderabilissima femina, ac terque beata! . . . . in mundum prodiisti, ut orbis universi saluti obsequaris.—*Serm.* i *in Nat. B. V.*

[5] Sicut . . . per illam omnes evaserunt diluvium, sic per istam peccati naufragium . . . Per illam, paucorum facta est liberatio: per istam humani generis salvatio.—*Serm. de B. Maria.*

is called "the new Eve, and the Mother of life;"[6] and not without reason, for the first was the Mother of death, but the most Blessed Virgin was the Mother of true life. Saint Theophanius of Nice, addressing Mary, says, "Hail, thou who hast taken away Eve's sorrow!"[7] Saint Basil of Seleucia calls her the peace-maker between men and God: "Hail, thou who art appointed umpire between God and men!"[8] and Saint Ephrem, the pacificator of the whole world: "Hail, reconciler of the whole world!"[9]

But now, it certainly would not be becoming to choose an enemy to treat of peace with the offended person, and still less an accomplice in the crime itself. Saint Gregory says, "that an enemy cannot undertake to appease his judge, who is at the same time the injured party; for if he did, instead of appeasing him, he would provoke him to greater wrath." And, therefore, as Mary was to be the mediatrix of peace between men and God, it was of the utmost importance that she should not herself appear as a sinner, and as an enemy of God, but that she should appear in all things as a friend, and free from every stain.

Still more was it becoming that God should preserve her from original sin, for He destined her to crush the head of that infernal serpent, which, by seducing our first parents, entailed death upon all men; and this our Lord foretold: "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head."[10] But if Mary was to be that valiant woman brought into the world to conquer

[6] Nova Heva, Mater vitæ nuncupata.—*Int. op. S. Athan. Serm. de Annunt. Deip.*

[7] Ave Domina Virgo, ave purissima, ave receptaculum Dei, ave candelabrum luminis, Adæ revocatio, Evæ redemptio, mons sanctum, manifestum sanctuarium, et sponsarium immortalitatis.—*In Annunc. B. M. V. Hymn.*

[8] Ave gratia plena, Dei ac hominum mediatrix, quo medius paries inimicitiæ tollatur, ac cœlestibus, terrena coeant ac uniantur.—*Orat. in S. M. et de Inc. D. N. J. C.*

[9] Ave totius terrarum orbis conciliatrix efficacissima.—*Serm. de Laud. Virg.*

[10] Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem, et semen tuum et semen illius; ipsa conteret caput tuum.—*Gen.* iii, 15.

Lucifer, certainly it was not becoming that he should first conquer her, and make her his slave; but it was reasonable that she should be preserved from all stain, and even momentary subjection to her opponent. The proud spirit endeavoured to infect the most pure soul of this Virgin with his venom, as he had already infected the whole human race. But praised and ever blessed be God, who, in His infinite goodness, pre-endowed her for this purpose with such great grace, that remaining always free from any guilt of sin, she was ever able to beat down and confound his pride, as Saint Augustine, or whoever may be the author of the commentary on Genesis, says: "Since the devil is the head of original sin, this head it was that Mary crushed; for sin never had any entry into the soul of this Blessed Virgin, which was consequently free from all stain."[11] And Saint Bonaventure more expressly says, "It was becoming that the Blessed Virgin Mary, by whom our shame was to be blotted out, and by whom the devil was to be conquered, should never even for a moment have been under his dominion."[12]

But above all, it principally became the Eternal Father to preserve this His daughter unspotted by Adam's sin, as Saint Bernardine of Sienna remarks, because he destined her to be the Mother of His only-begotten Son: "Thou wast preordained in the mind of God, before all creatures, that thou mightest beget God himself as man."[13] If then for no other end, at least for the honor of his Son, who was God, it was reasonable that the Father should create Mary free from every

[11] Cum peccati originalis caput sit diabolus, tale caput Maria contrivit, quia nulla peccati subjectio ingressum habuit in animam Virginis, et ideo ab omni macula immunis fuit.—*Cit. loc. Gen.* †

[12] Congruum erat ut beata Virgo Maria, per quam aufertur nobis opprobrium, vinceret diabolum, ut nec ei succumberet ad modicum.—Lib. iii, Dist. 3, art. 2, q. 1.

[13] Tu, ante omnem creaturam, in mente Dei præordinati fuisti, ut omnium fœminarum castissima, Deum ipsum hominem verum, ex tua carne procreares.—*Serm. de Concep. B. M. V.* art. iii, cap. 3.

stain. The angelic Saint Thomas says, that all things that are ordained for God should be holy and free from stain: "Holiness is to be attributed to those things which are ordained for God."[14] Hence when David was planning the temple of Jerusalem, on a scale of magnificence becoming a God, he said, "For a house is prepared not for man, but for God."[15] How much more reasonable then is it not, to suppose that the Sovereign Architect, who destined Mary to be the Mother of His own Son, adorned her soul with all most precious gifts, that she might be a dwelling worthy of a God! Denis the Carthusian says, "that God, the artificer of all things, when constructing a worthy dwelling for his son, adorned it with all attractive graces."[16] And the Holy Church herself, in the following prayer, assures us that God prepared the body and soul of the Blessed Virgin, so as to be a worthy dwelling on earth for His only-begotten Son. "Almighty and Eternal God, who, by the cooperation of the Holy Ghost, didst prepare the body and soul of the glorious Virgin and Mother Mary, that she might become a worthy habitation for thy Son, &c."[17]

We know that a man's highest honor is to be born of noble parents: "And the glory of children are their fathers."[18] Hence in the world, the reputation of being possessed of only a small fortune, and little learning, is more easily tolerated than that of being of low birth; for whilst a poor man may become rich by his industry, an ignorant man learned by

[14] Sanctitas illis rebus attribuitur, quæ in Deum ordinantur.—1 p. q. xxxvi, art. 1, concl.

[15] Neque enim homini præparatur habitatio, sed Deo.—1 *Paralip.* xxix, 1.

[16] Omnium artifex Deus, ad ipsius formationem in utero supernaturaliter concurrens, Filio suo dignum habitaculum fabricaturus, eam intrinsecus, omnium gratificantium charismatum, et dignificantium habituum plenitudine, adornavit.—*De Laud. V.* lib. ii, art. 2.

[17] Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, qui gloriosæ Virginis Matris Mariæ corpus et animam, ut dignum Filii tui habitaculum effici mereretur, Spiritu Sancto cooperante præparasti, &c.

[18] Gloria filiorum patres eorum.—*Prov.* xvii, 6.

study, it is very difficult for a person of humble origin to attain the rank of nobility; but even should he attain it, his birth can always be made a subject of reproach to him. How then can we suppose that God, who could cause His Son to be born of a noble mother by preserving her from sin, would on the contrary permit Him to be born of one infected by it, and thus enable Lucifer always to reproach Him, with the shame of having a mother who had once been his slave, and the enemy of God? No, certainly, the Eternal Father did not permit this, but He well provided for the honor of His Son, by preserving His Mother always Immaculate, that she might be a Mother becoming such a Son. The Greek church bears witness to this, saying, "that God, by a singular providence, caused the most Blessed Virgin to be as perfectly pure from the very first moment of her existence, as it was fitting that she should be, who was to be the worthy Mother of Christ."[19]

It is a common axiom amongst theologians, that no gift was ever bestowed on any creature with which the Blessed Virgin was not also enriched. St. Bernard says on this subject, "It is certainly not wrong to suppose that that which has evidently been bestowed, even on only a few, was not denied to so great a Virgin."[20] Saint Thomas of Villanova says, "Nothing was ever granted to any Saint which did not shine in a much higher degree in Mary, from the very first moment of her existence."[21] And as it is true that "there is an infinite difference between the Mother of God, and the

[19] Providentia singulari perfecit, ut SS. Virgo, ab ipso vitæ suæ principio, tam omnino existeret pura quam decebat illam, quæ Christo digna mater existeret.—*In Men. die* xxv *Martii.* †

[20] Quod . . . vel paucis mortalium constat fuisse collatum, fas certe non est suspicari tantæ Virgini esse negatum.—*Ep.* clxxiv *ad. Can. Lugd.*

[21] Nihil . . . usquam sanctorum, speciali privilegio concessum est, quod non a principio vitæ, accumulatius prefulgeat in Maria.—*In fest. Assump. B. V.* conc. i.

servants of God,"[22] according to the celebrated saying of Saint John Damascene, we must certainly suppose, according to the doctrine of Saint Thomas, that "God conferred privileges of grace in every way greater on His Mother than on His servants."[23] And now admitting this, Saint Anselm, the great defender of the Immaculate Mary, takes up the question and says, "Was the wisdom of God unable to form a pure dwelling, and to remove every stain of human nature from it?"[24] Perhaps God could not prepare a clean habitation for his Son, by preserving it from the common contagion? "God," continues the same Saint, "could preserve angels in heaven spotless, in the midst of the devastation that surrounded them, was He then unable to preserve the mother of His Son, and the Queen of angels, from the common fall of men!"[25] And I may here add, that as God could grant Eve the grace to come immaculate into the world, could He not then grant the same favor to Mary!

Yes, indeed! God could do it, and did it; for on every account "it was becoming," as the same Saint Anselm says, "that that Virgin, on whom the Eternal Father intended to bestow His only-begotten Son, should be adorned with such purity, as not only to exceed that of all men and angels, but exceeding any purity that can be conceived, after that of God."[26] And Saint John Damascene speaks in still clearer terms; for he says, "that our Lord had preserved the soul,

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[22] Infinitum Dei servorum ac Matris discrimen est.—*Hom.* i, *in Dorm. B. V. M.*

[23] Rationabiliter . . . creditur quod illa quæ genuit Unigenitum a Patre plenum gratiæ et veritatis, præ omnibus aliis, majora privilegia gratiæ acceperit.—3 p. q. xxvii, art. 1, concl.

[24] Inscia ne fuit et impotens, sapientia Dei et virtus, mundum sibi habitaculum condere, remota omni labe conditionis humanæ?—*De Concept. B. M. V.*

[25] Angelis aliis peccantibus, bonos a peccatis servavit; et fœminam, matrem suam mox futuram, ab aliorum peccatis exortem servare non potuit!—*Ib.*

[26] Decens erat, ut ea puritate qua major sub Deo nequit intelligi, Virgo illa niteret, cui Deus Pater, unicum Filium suum . . . ita dare disponebat.—*De Concep. Virg.* cap. xviii.

together with the body of the Blessed Virgin, in that purity which became her who was to receive a God into her womb; for, as He is holy, He only reposes in holy places."[27] And thus the Eternal Father could well say to His beloved daughter, "As the lily among thorns; so is my love among the daughters."[28] My daughter, amongst all my other daughters, thou art as a lily in the midst of thorns; for they are all stained with sin, but thou wast always Immaculate, and always my beloved.

Second point.—In the second place it was becoming that the Son should preserve Mary from sin, as being His Mother. No one can choose his mother; but should such a thing ever be granted to any one, who is there who, if able to choose a queen, would wish for a slave? If able to choose a noble lady, would he wish for a servant? Or if able to choose a friend of God, would he wish for His enemy? If then the Son of God alone could choose a Mother according to His own heart—His own liking, we must consider, as a matter of course, that He chose one becoming a God. Saint Bernard says, "that the Creator of men, becoming Man, must have selected Himself a Mother whom He knew became Him."[29] And as it was becoming that a most pure God should have a Mother pure from all sin, He created her spotless. Saint Bernardine of Sienna, speaking of the different degrees of sanctification, says, that "the third is that obtained by becoming the Mother of God; and that this sanctification consists in the entire removal of original sin. This is what took place in the Blessed Virgin: truly God created Mary such, both as to the eminence of her

[27] . . . . animum una cum corpore Virginem conservasset, veluti decebat illam, quæ sinu suo conceptura Deum erat, qui, cum Ipse sanctus sit, in sanctis requiescit.—*De Fide orth.* lib. iv, cap. 14.

[28] Sicut lilium inter spinas, sic amica mea inter filias.—*Cant.* ii, 2.

[29] Factor hominum, ut homo fieret, nasciturus de homine talem sibi ex omnibus debuit deligere, imo condere matrem, qualem, et se decere sciebat, et sibi noverat placituram.—*Sup. Miss.* Hom. ii.

nature, and the perfection of grace with which he endowed her, as became Him who was to be born of her."[30] Here we may apply the words of the Apostle to the Hebrews: "For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest; holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners."[31] A learned author observes, that, according to Saint Paul, it was fitting that our Blessed Redeemer should not only be separated from sin, but also from sinners; according to the explanation of Saint Thomas, who says, "that it was necessary that He, who came to take away sins, should be separated from sinners, as to the fault under which Adam lay."[32] But how could Jesus Christ be said to be separated from sinners, if He had a Mother who was a sinner?

Saint Ambrose says, "that Christ chose this vessel into which He was about to descend, not of earth, but from Heaven; and He consecrated it a temple of purity."[33] The Saint alludes to the text of Saint Paul: "The first man was of the earth, earthly: the second man from heaven, heavenly."[34] The Saint calls the Divine Mother "a heavenly vessel," not because Mary was not earthly by nature, as heretics have dreamt, but because she was heavenly by grace; she was as superior to the angels of heaven in sanctity and purity, as it was becoming that she should be, in whose womb a King of Glory was to dwell. This agrees with that which Saint John the Baptist revealed to Saint

[30] Tertia fuit sanctificatio maternalis, et hæc removet culpam originalem . . . Hæc fuit in B. Virgine Maria matre Dei. Sane Deus . . . talem, tam nobilitate naturæ, quam perfectione, gratiæ, condidit matrem, qualem eam decebat habere suam gloriosissimam majestatem.—*Pro. Concep. Im. V.* art. i, cap. i.

[31] Talis enim decebat ut nobis esset pontifex, sanctus, innocens, impollutus, segregatus a peccatoribus, et excelsior, cœlis factus.—*Heb.* vii, 26.

[32] Opportuit enim, qui peccata venerat tollere, esse a peccatoribus segregatum, quantum ad culpam cui Adam subjacuit.—3 p. q. iv, art. 6, ad. 2.

[33] Non de terra utique, sed de cœlo, vas sibi hoc per quod descenderet Christus elegit, et sacravit templum pudoris.—*De Inst. V.* cap. v.

[34] Primus homo de terra, terrenus; secudus homo de cœlo, cœlestis.—1 *Cor.* xv, 47.

Bridget, saying, "It was not becoming that the King of Glory should repose otherwise than in a chosen vessel, exceeding all men and angels in purity."[35] And to this we may add that which the Eternal Father Himself said to the same Saint: "Mary was a clean and an unclean vessel: clean, for she was all fair; but unclean, because she was born of sinners; though she was conceived without sin that My Son might be born of her without sin."[36] And remark these last words, "Mary was conceived without sin, that the Divine Son might be born of her without sin." Not that Jesus Christ could have contracted sin, but that He might not be reproached with even having a Mother infected with it, who would consequently have been the slave of the devil.

The Holy Ghost says that "the glory of a man is from the honor of his father, and a father without honor is the disgrace of the son;"[37] "Therefore it was," says an ancient writer, "that Jesus preserved the body of Mary from corruption after death; for it would have redounded to His dishonor had that virginal flesh with which He had clothed Himself become the food of worms;" "For," he adds, "corruption is a disgrace of human nature; and as Jesus was not subject to it, Mary was also exempted; for the flesh of Jesus is the flesh of Mary."[38] But since the corruption of her body would have been a disgrace for Jesus Christ, because He was born of her, how much greater would the disgrace have been had He been born of a mother

[35] Non decuit Regem gloriæ jacere, nisi in vase purissimo, et mundissimo, et electissimo, præ omnibus Angelis et hominibus.—*Rev.* lib. i, cap. 31.

[36] Maria fuit vas mundum, et non mundum. Mundum vero fuit, quia tota pulchra . . . Sed non mundum fuit, quia . . . de peccatoribus nata est, licet sine peccato concepta, ut Filius Meus de ea, sine peccato nasceretur.—*Rev.* lib. v, *Exp. Rev.* xiii.

[37] Gloria enim hominis ex honore patris sui, et dedecus filii pater sine honore.—*Eccles.* iii, 13.

[38] Putredo namque et vermis, humanæ est opprobrium conditionis, a quo opprobrio, cum Jesus sit alienus, natura Mariæ excipitur . . . caro enim Jesu, caro est Mariæ.—*De Assump. B. M. V.* lib.

whose soul was once infected with the corruption of sin? For not only is it true that the flesh of Jesus is the same as that of Mary; "but," adds the same author, "the flesh of our Saviour, even after His resurrection, remained the same that He had taken from His Mother:" "The flesh of Christ is the flesh of Mary, and though it was glorified by the glory of His resurrection, yet it remains the same that was taken from Mary."[39] Hence the Abbot Arnold of Chartres says, "The flesh of Mary and that of Christ are one; and, therefore, I consider the glory of the Son as being not so much common to, as one with that of His Mother."[40] And now if this is true, supposing that the Blessed Virgin was conceived in sin, though the Son could not have contracted its stain, nevertheless His having united flesh to Himself which was once infected with sin, a vessel of uncleanness, and subject to Lucifer, would always have been a blot.

Mary was not only the Mother, but the worthy Mother of our Saviour. She is called so by all the holy Fathers. Saint Bernard says, "Thou alone wast found worthy to be chosen as the one in whose Virginal womb the King of kings should have his first abode."[41] Saint Thomas of Villanova says, "Before she conceived, she was already fit to be the Mother of God."[42-3] The holy Church herself attests that Mary merited to be the Mother of Jesus Christ, saying, "the Blessed Virgin, who merited to bear in her womb Christ our Lord;"[44] and Saint Thomas Aquinas, explaining

[39] Caro enim Christi, quamvis gloria resurrectionis fuerit magnificata . . . eadem tamen carnis mansit et manet natura, quæ suscepta est de Maria.—*Ib.*

[40] Una est Mariæ et Christi caro . . . Filii gloriam cum matre, non tam commune judico, quam eandem.—*De Laud. B. M.*

[41] Tu sola inventa es digna, ut in tua virginali aula, Rex regum . . . primam sibi mansionem . . . elegit.—*Depr. ad B. V.*

[42-3] Antequam conciperet Filium Dei, jam idonea erat, ut esset Mater Dei.—*Serm.* iii, *de Nat. B. V.*

[44] Regina cœli lætare . . . quia quem meruisti portare . . . Resurrexit sicut dixit.—*Antiph. temp. Pasch.*

these words, says, "the Blessed Virgin is said to have merited to bear the Lord of all: not that she merited His Incarnation, but that she merited, by the graces she had received, such a degree of purity and sanctity that she could becomingly be the Mother of God;"[45] that is to say, Mary could not merit the incarnation of the Eternal Word, but by Divine grace she merited such a degree of perfection as to render her worthy to be the Mother of a God, according to what Saint Peter Damian also writes: "Her singular sanctity, the effect of grace, merited that she alone should be judged worthy to receive a God."[46]

And now supposing that Mary was worthy to be the Mother of God, "what excellency and what perfection was there that did not become her?"[47] asks Saint Thomas of Villanova. The angelic Doctor says, "that when God chooses any one for a particular dignity, He renders him fit for it;" whence he adds, "that God, having chosen Mary for His Mother, He also, by His grace, rendered her worthy of this highest of all dignities." "The Blessed Virgin was Divinely chosen to be the Mother of God, and, therefore, we cannot doubt that God had fitted her by His grace for this dignity; and we are assured of it by the angel: "For thou hast found grace with God; behold, thou shalt conceive," &c.[48] And thence the Saint argues that "the Blessed Virgin never com-

[45] Beata Virgo dicitur meruisse portare Dominum omnium: non quia meruit ipsum incarnari, sed quia meruit ex gratia sibi data, illum puritatis et sanctitatis gradum, ut congrue posset esse Mater Dei.—3 p. q. 2, art. xi, ad. 3.

[46] Venerabilis Mater Domini, septem Sancti Spiritus donis . . . dotata fuit. Quam utique æterna sapientia . . . talem construxit, quæ digna fieret Illum suscipere.—*Serm.* ii, *de Nat. B. M. V.*

[47] Quæ autem excellentia, quæ perfectio, quæ magnitudo decuit eam, ut esset idonea Mater Dei.—*Serm.* iii, *de Nat. B. B. V.*

[48] Beata autem Virgo fuit electa divinitus, ut esset mater Dei; et ideo non est dubitandum quin Deus per suam gratiam, eam ad hoc idoneam reddidit, secundum quod Angelus ad eam dicit, "Invenisti gratiam apud Deum: ecce concipies, &c."—3 p. q. xxvii, art. 4, concl.

mitted any actual sin, not even a venial one." "Otherwise," he says, "she would not have been a Mother worthy of Jesus Christ; for the ignominy of the Mother would also have been that of the Son, for He would have had a sinner for His Mother."[49] And now if Mary, on account of a single venial sin, which does not deprive a soul of Divine grace, would not have been a Mother worthy of God, how much more unworthy would she have been had she contracted the guilt of original sin, which would have made her an enemy of God and a slave of the devil? And this reflection it was that made Saint Augustine utter those memorable words, that "when speaking of Mary for the honor of our Lord," whom she merited to have for her Son, he would not entertain even the question of sin in her; "for we know," he says, "that through Him, who it is evident was without sin, and whom she merited to conceive and bring forth, she received grace to conquer all sin."[50]

Therefore, as Saint Peter Damian observes, we must consider it as certain "that the Incarnate Word chose Himself a becoming Mother and one of whom He would not have to be ashamed."[51] Saint Proclus also says, "that He dwelt in a womb which He had created, free from all that might be to His dishonor."[52] It was no shame to Jesus Christ, when He heard Himself contemptuously called by the Jews the Son of Mary, meaning that He was the Son of a poor

[49] Non . . . fuisset idonea mater Dei, si peccasset aliquando . . . quia . . . ignominia Matris, ad Filum redundasset.—*Ib.*

[50] Excepta itaque sancta Virgine Maria, de qua, propter honorem Domini, nullam prorsus cum de peccatis agitur, haberi volo quæstionem: unde enim scimus, quod ei, plus gratiæ collatum fuerit ad vincendum, omni ex parte peccatum, quæ concipere ac parere meruit, quem constat nullum habuisse peccatum.—*De Nat. et Gratia. contra Pelag.* cap. xxvi.

[51] Quam utique æterna Sapientia . . . talem construxit, quæ digna fieret illum suscipere, et de intemeratæ carnis suæ visceribus procreare.—*Serm.* ii, *in Nat. B. M. V.*

[52] Intra viscera, quæ citra omnem dedecoris notam condiderat, inhabitat.—*Hom. de Nat. D. N. J. C.*

woman: "Is not His Mother called Mary?"[53] for He came into this world to give us an example of humility and patience. But, on the other hand, it would undoubtedly have been a disgrace, could He have heard the devil say, "Was not His Mother a sinner? was He not born of a wicked Mother, who was once our slave?" It would even have been unbecoming had Jesus Christ been born of a woman whose body was deformed, or crippled, or possessed by devils; but how much more would it have been so had He been born of a woman whose soul had been once deformed by sin, and in the possession of Lucifer?

Ah! indeed, God, who is Wisdom itself, well knew how to prepare Himself a becoming dwelling, in which to reside on earth: "Wisdom hath built herself a house."[54] "The Most High hath sanctified His own tabernacle . . . God will help it in the morning early."[55] David says, that our Lord sanctified this His dwelling "in the morning early;" that is to say, from the beginning of her life, to render her worthy of Himself; for it was not becoming that a Holy God should choose Himself a dwelling that was not holy: "Holiness becometh thy house."[56] And if God declares that He will never enter a malicious soul, or dwell in a body subject to sin,"for wisdom will not enter into a malicious soul, nor dwell in a body subject to sins,"[57] how can we ever think that the Son of God chose to dwell in the soul and body of Mary, without having previously sanctified and preserved it from every stain of sin? for, according to the doctrine of Saint Thomas, "the Eternal

[53] Nonne mater ejus dicitur Maria?—*Matth.* xiii, 55.

[54] Sapientia ædificavit sibi domum.—*Prov.* ix, 1.

[55] Sanctificavit tabernaculum suum Altissimus . . . adjuvabit eam Deus mane diluculo.—*Ps.* xlv, 5, 6.

[56] Domum tuam decet sanctitudo.—*Ps.* xcii, 5.

[57] In malevolam animam non introibit sapientia, nec habitabit in corpore subdito peccatis.—*Sap.* i, 4.

Word dwelt not only in the soul of Mary, but even in her womb."[58] The holy Church sings, "Thou, O Lord, hast not disdained to dwell in the Virgin's womb."[59] Yes, for He would have disdained to have taken flesh in the womb of an Agnes, a Gertrude, a Teresa, because these virgins, though holy, were nevertheless for a time stained with original sin; but He did not disdain to become man in the womb of Mary, because this beloved Virgin was always pure and free from the least shadow of sin, and was never possessed by the infernal serpent. And, therefore, Saint Augustine says, "that the Son of God never made Himself a more worthy dwelling than Mary, who was never possessed by the enemy, or despoiled of her ornaments."[60]

On the other hand, Saint Cyril of Alexandria asks, "Who ever heard of an architect who built himself a temple, and yielded up the first possession of it to his greatest enemy?"[61]

Yes, says Saint Methodius, speaking on the same subject, that Lord who commanded us to honor our parents, would not do otherwise, when he became man, than observe it, by giving His Mother every grace and honor:— "He who said, Honor thy father and thy mother, that He might observe His own decree, gave all grace and honor to His Mother."[62] Therefore the author of the book already quoted, from the works of Saint Augustine, says, "that

[58] Singulari modo Dei Filius, qui est Dei sapientia, in ipsa habitavit; non solum in anima, sed etiam in utero.—3 p. q. xxvii, art. 4, concl.

[59] Non horruisti Virginis uterum.

[60] Nullam digniorem domum sibi Filius Dei ædificavit quam Mariam, quæ nunquam fuit ab hostibus capta, neque suis ornamentis spoliata. †

[61] Quis unquam de architecto audivit, qui suum ipsius templum construxerit, et in eo habitare prohibitus sit?—*Hom.* vi.

[62] Qui dixit, "Honora patrem tuum et matrem," longe potius id ipse præstare volens, gratiam servaverit ac quod ita statuit, ei, quæ ministravit ut sic sponte nasceretur, Divinisque laudibus decoraverit, quam sine patre, velut innuptam sibi matrem ascivit.—*Serm. de Symeone et Anna.*

we must certainly believe that Jesus Christ preserved the body of Mary from corruption after death; for if He had not done so, he would not have observed the law," which "at the same time that it commands us to honor our mother it forbids us to show her disrespect."[63] But how little would Jesus have guarded His Mother's honor had He not preserved her from Adam's sin? "Certainly, that son would sin," says the Augustinian father Thomas of Strasburg, "who, having it in his power to preserve his mother from original sin, did not do so:" "but that which would be a sin in us," continues the same author, "must certainly be considered unbecoming in the Son of God, who, whilst He could make His Mother immaculate, did it not." "Ah, no!" exclaims Gerson, "since thou, the supreme Prince, choosest to have a Mother, certainly Thou owest her honor. But now if Thou didst permit her, who was to be the dwelling of all purity, to be in the abomination of original sin, certainly it would appear that that law was not well fulfilled."[64]

"Moreover, we know," says Saint Bernardine of Sienna, "that the Divine Son came into the world more to redeem Mary than all other creatures."[65] There are two means by which a person may be redeemed, as Saint Augustine teaches us—the one by raising him up after having fallen, and the other by preventing him from falling;[66] and this last means is doubtless the most honorable. "He is more

[63] Lex enim, sicut honorem matris præcipit, ita inhonorationem damnat.—*Lib. de Assump. B. V. int. op. S. Augustini.*

[64] Cum tu summus Princeps, vis habere Matrem carnaliter in terra, illi debebis honorem, &c. Nunc autem appareret illam legem non bene adimpleri, si in hujusmodi abominatione, immunditia, et subjectione peccati, aliquo tempore permitteres illam, quæ esse debet habitaculum, templum, et palatium totius puritatis.—*Serm. de Concep. B. M. V.*

[65] Christus plus pro ipsa redimenda venit, quam pro omni alia creatura.—*Serm. de Concep. B. M. V.* art. iii, cap. 3.

[66] *Enarratio in Ps.* lxxxv, versic. 3.

honorably redeemed," says the learned Suarez, "who is prevented from falling, than he who after falling is raised up;"[67] for thus the injury or stain is avoided which the soul always contracts by falling. This being the case, we ought certainly to believe that Mary was redeemed in the more honorable way, and the one which became the Mother of God, as Saint Bonaventure remarks; "for it is to be believed that the Holy Ghost, as a very special favor, redeemed and preserved her from original sin by a new kind of sanctification, and this in the very moment of her conception; not that sin was in her, but that it otherwise would have been."[68] The sermon, from which this passage is taken, is proved by Frassen[69] to be really the work of the holy Doctor above named. On the same subject Cardinal Cusano elegantly remarks, that "others had Jesus as a liberator, but to the most Blessed Virgin He was a pre-liberator;"[70] meaning, that all others had a Redeemer who delivered them from sin with which they were already defiled, but that the most Blessed Virgin had a Redeemer who, because He was her Son preserved her from ever being defiled by it.

[67] Duplex est redimendi modus, unus erigendo lapsum, alter præveniendo jamjam lapsurum, ne cadat, juxta illud Psalm. 143: "Redemisti servum tuum de gladio maligno;" id est, custodisti, ne interficeretur. Ex his autem posterior modus est, sine dubio opus majoris gratiæ, et benevolentiæ, et cæteris paribus, majoris efficaciæ, ac potestatis; ergo decuit, ut Christus Matrem suam nobilissimo modo redimeret.—*De Incarnat.* p. 2, q. xxvii, art. 2, disp. 3, sect. 5.

[68] Credendum est enim, quod novo sanctificationis genere, in ejus conceptionis primordio, Spiritus Sanctus eam a peccato originali (non quod infruit, sed quod infuisset), redemit, atque singulari gratia præservavit.—*Serm.* ii, *de B. V. M.*

[69] *Scot. Acad.* tom. viii, a. 3, sec. 3, q. i, No. 5. †

[70] Prælibératorem enim Virgo Sancta habuit, cæteri liberatorem et post-liberatorem. Christus enim sic omnium liberator, quod et Virginis liberator et præ-liberator, cæterorum vero liberator et post-liberator. Ipsa sola post Adæ lapsum, non indiga, sed plena originali justitia, ut Eva, et multo magis, creata fuit.—*Excitat* lib. viii, *Serm. Sicut lil. int. sp.*

In fine, to conclude this point in the words of Hugo of Saint Victor, the tree is known by its fruits. If the Lamb was always immaculate, the Mother must also have been always immaculate: "Such the Lamb, such the Mother of the Lamb; for the tree is known by its fruits."[71] Hence this same Doctor salutes Mary, saying, "O worthy Mother of a worthy Son;" meaning, that no other than Mary was worthy to be the Mother of such a Son, and no other than Jesus was a worthy Son of such a Mother: and then he adds these words: "O fair Mother of beauty itself, O high Mother of the most High, O Mother of God."[72] Let us then address this most Blessed Mother in the words of Saint Ildephonsus, "Suckle, O Mary, thy Creator, give milk to Him who made thee, and who made thee such that He could be made of thee."[73]

Third point.—Since then it was becoming that the Father should preserve Mary from sin as His daughter, and the Son as His Mother, it was also becoming that the Holy Ghost should preserve her as His spouse. Saint Augustine says that "Mary was that only one who merited to be called the Mother and Spouse of God."[74] For Saint Anselm asserts that "the Divine Spirit, the love itself of the Father and the Son, came corporally into Mary, and enriching her with graces above all creatures, reposed in her and made her His Spouse, the Queen of

[71] Talis . . . Agnus, qualis Mater Agni . . . Quoniam omnis arbor ex fructu suo cognoscitur.—*De Verbo Inc. Coll.* iii.

[72] O digna digni, formosa pulchri, munda incorrupti, excelsa altissimi, Mater Dei, Sponsa Regis æterni.—*Serm.* iii, *de Assump. B. M. V.*

[73] Lacta Maria, Creatorem tuum, lacta panem cœli, lacta præmium mundi . . . Lacta ergo eum qui fecit te, qui talem fecit te ut ipse fieret ex te.—*Serm. de Nat. B. M. V.*

[74] Hæc est quæ sola meruit Mater et Sponsa vocari.—*Serm. de Assumpt. B. M. V.* †

heaven and earth."[75] He says that he came into her corporally; that is, as to the effect: for He came to form of her immaculate body the immaculate body of Jesus Christ, as the Archangel had already predicted to her: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee."[76] And therefore it is, says Saint Thomas, "that Mary is called the temple of the Lord and the sacred resting-place of the Holy Ghost; for by the operation of the Holy Ghost she became the Mother of the Incarnate Word."[77]

And now had an excellent artist the power to make his bride such as he could represent her, what pains would he not take to render her as beautiful as possible? Who then can say that the Holy Ghost did otherwise with Mary, when He could make her who was to be His spouse, as beautiful as it became Him that she should be?

Ah no! He acted as it became Him to act; for this same Lord Himself declares: "Thou art all fair, O my love, and there is not a spot in thee."[78] These words, say Saint Ildephonsus and Saint Thomas, are properly to be understood of Mary, as Cornelius à Lapide remarks; and Saint Bernardine of Sienna,[79] and Saint Lawrence Justinian,[80] assert that they are to be understood precisely as applying to her Immaculate Conception; whence Blessed Raymond Jordano addresses her, saying, "Thou art all

[75] Ipse . . . Spiritus Dei, ipse amor Omnipotentis Patris et Filii . . . ipse inquam, corporaliter, ut bene dicam, venit in eam, singularique gratia præ omnibus quæ creata sunt, sive in cœlo, sive in terra, requievit in ea, et reginam ac imperatricem cœli et terræ et omnium quæ in eis sunt, fecit eam.—*De Excel. Virg.* cap. iv.

[76] Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te.—*Luc.* i, 35.

[77] Unde dicitur templum Domini, sacrarium Spiritus Sancti, quia concepit ex Spiritu Sancto.—*Opusc.* viii.

[78] Tota pulchra es amica mea, et macula non est in te.—*Cant.* iv, 7.

[79] *Serm. de Concep. B. M. V.* art. ii, c. 2.

[80] *Serm. de Nat. B. M. V.*

fair, O most glorious Virgin, not in part, but wholly; and no stain of mortal, venial, or original sin, is in thee."[81]

The Holy Ghost signified the same thing when He called this His Spouse an inclosed garden and a sealed fountain: "My sister, my spouse, is a garden inclosed, a fountain sealed up."[82] "Mary," says Saint Sophronius, "was this inclosed garden and sealed fountain, into which no guile could enter, against which no fraud of the enemy could prevail, and who always was holy in mind and body."[83] Saint Bernard likewise says, addressing the Blessed Virgin, "Thou are an inclosed garden, into which the sinner's hand has never entered to pluck its flowers."[84]

We know that this Divine Spouse loved Mary more than all the other Saints and Angels put together, as Father Suarez, with Saint Lawrence Justinian, and others assert, He loved her from the very beginning and exalted her in sanctity above all others, as it is expressed by David in the Psalms: "The foundations thereof are in the holy mountains: the Lord loveth the gates of Sion above all the tabernacles of Jacob . . . . a man is born in her, and the Highest Himself hath founded her."[85] Words which all signify that Mary was holy from her conception. The same thing is signified by other passages addressed to her by the Holy

[81] Tota . . . pulchra es Virgo gloriosissima, non in parte, sed in toto: et macula peccati, sive mortalis, sive venialis, sive originalis, non est in te.—*Contempl. B. V.* cap. ii.

[82] Hortus conclusus soror mea sponsa, hortus conclusus, fons signatus.—*Cant.* iv, 12.

[83] Hæc est hortus conclusus, fons signatus, puteus aquarum viventium, ad quam nulli potuerunt doli irrumpere: nec prævaluit fraus inimici, sed permansit sancta, mente et corpore.—*Serm. de Assump. B. M. V. int. op. S. Hieron.*

[84] Hortus conclusus tu es Dei genitrix, ad quem deflorandum manus peccatoris munquam introivit.—*Depr. ad. B. V. M.*

[85] Fundamenta ejus in montibus sanctis: Diligit Dominus portas Sion super omnia tabernacula Jacob . . . Homo natus est in ea et ipse fundavit eam Altissimus.—*Ps.* lxxxvi, 1, 5.

Ghost. In Proverbs we read, "Many daughters have gathered together riches: thou hast surpassed them all."[86] If Mary has surpassed all others in the riches of grace, she must have had original justice, as Adam and the Angels had it. In the Canticles we read, "There are . . . . young maidens without number. One is my dove, my perfect one (in the Hebrew it is my entire, my immaculate one), is but one, she is the only one of her Mother."[87] All just souls are daughters of Divine grace; but amongst these Mary was the *dove* without the gall of sin, the *perfect* one without spot in her origin, the *one* conceived in grace.

Hence it is that the angel, before she became the Mother of God, already found her full of grace, and thus saluted her, "Hail, full of Grace;" on which words Saint Sophronius writes, that "grace is given partially to other Saints, but to the Blessed Virgin all was given."[88] So much so, says Saint Thomas, that "grace not only rendered the soul, but even the flesh of Mary holy, so that this Blessed Virgin might be able to clothe the Eternal Word with it."[89] Now all this leads us to the conclusion that Mary, from the moment of her conception, was enriched and filled with Divine grace by the Holy Ghost, as Peter of Celles remarks, "the plenitude of grace was in her; for from the very moment of her conception the whole grace of the Divinity overflowed upon her, by the outpouring of the Holy

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[86] Multæ filiæ congregaverunt divitias: tu supergressa es universas.—*Prov.* xxxi, 29.

[87] Adolescentularum non est numerus. Una est columba mea, perfecta mea, una est matris suæ.—*Cant.* vi, 7, 8.

[88] Gratia plena: et bene plena, quia cæteris per partes præstatur: Mariæ vero simul se tota infudit plenitudo gratiæ.—*Serm. de Assump. B. M. V. int. op. S. Hieron.*

[89] Anima B. Virginis ita fuit plena, quod ex ea refundit gratia in carnem, ut de ipsa conciperet Deum.—*Opusc.* viii.

Ghost."[90] Hence Saint Peter Damian says, "that the Holy Spirit was about to bear her off entirely to Himself, who was chosen and pre-elected by God."[91] The Saint says, to bear her off, to denote the holy velocity of the Divine Spirit, in being beforehand, in making this Spouse His own, before Lucifer should take possession of her.

Finally, I wish to conclude this discourse, which I have prolonged beyond the limits of the others, because our Congregation has this Blessed Virgin Mary, precisely under the title of her Immaculate Conception, for its principal patroness: I say that I wish to conclude by giving, in as few words as possible, the reasons which make me feel certain, and which, in my opinion, ought to convince every one of the truth of so pious a belief, and which is so glorious for the Divine Mother: that is, that she was free from original sin.

There are many Doctors who maintain that Mary was exempted from contracting even the debt of sin; for instance, Cardinal Galatino,[92] Cardinal Cusano,[93] De Ponte,[94] Salazar,[95] Catharinus,[96] Novarino,[97] Viva, De Lugo,[98] Egidio, Richelio, and others. And this opinion is also probable; for if it is true that the wills of all men were included in that of Adam, as being the head of all, and this opinion is main-

[90] Simul collecta gratiæ plenitudo, nullatenus creaturæ humanæ capacitate potest apprehendi . . . privilegio . . . Filii sui, supra totius creaturæ meritum Mater Dei aspersione Spiritus Sancti, tota Deitatis gratia est perfusa.—*Lib. de Panib.* cap. xii.

[91] A Deo electam et præelectam, totam eam rapturus erat sibi Spiritus Sanctus.—*Serm. de Annunt. B. M. V.*

[92] *De Arca*, lib. vii, c. 18. †

[93] Lib. viii, *Excit. ex Serm. Sicut. lib. int. sp.*

[94] Lib. ii, *Cant.* ex. 10. †

[95] *De Virg. Conc.* c. vii, n. 7. †

[96] *De Pecc. orig.* c. ult. †

[97] *Umbr. Virg. Excursus*, xviii.

[98] P. viii, disp. i, q. 2, art. 2.

tained as probable by Gonet,[99] Habert,[1] and others, founded on the doctrine of Saint Paul, contained in the fifth chapter to the Romans,—if this opinion, I say, is probable, it is also probable that Mary did not contract the debt of sin; for, whilst God distinguished her from the common of men by so many graces, it ought to be piously believed that He did not include her will in that of Adam.

This opinion is only probable, and I adhere to it as being more glorious for my sovereign Lady. But I consider the opinion, that Mary did not contract the sin of Adam, as certain; and it is considered so, and even as proximately definable, as an article of faith (as they express it), by Cardinal Everard,[2] Duval,[3] Raynauld,[4] Lossada,[5] Viva,[6] and many others. I omit, however, the revelations which confirm this belief, particularly those of Saint Bridget, which were approved of by Cardinal Torquemada,[7] and by four sovereign Pontiffs, and which are found in various parts of the sixth book of her Revelations.[8] But on no account can I omit the opinions of the holy Fathers on this subject, whereby to show their unanimity in conceding this privilege to the Divine Mother. Saint Ambrose says, "Receive me not from Sarah, but from Mary, that it may be an uncorrupted Virgin, a Virgin free by grace from every stain of sin."[9] Origen, speaking of Mary, asserts that "she was not

[99] *Man.* to. iii, tr. 5, c. 6, No. 2. †

[1] Tom. iii *de Pec.* c. 7. †

[2] Per unum hominem peccatum in hunc mundum intravit . . . in quo (Ada) omnes peccaverunt.—*Rom.* v, 12.

[3] *In Exam. Theol.* †

[4] 1, 2, Qu. 2 *de Pecc.* †

[5] *Piet. Lugd.* No. 29. †

[6] *Disc. Th. de Imm. Conc.* †

[7] *Qu. Prod. ad Trut.* †

[8] Lib. vi, cap. 12, 49, 55.

[9] Suscipe me non ex Sara, sed ex Maria; ut incorrupta sit Virgo, sed Virgo per gratiam ab omni integra labe peccati.—*Serm.* xxii *in Ps.* cxviii, No. 30.

infected by the venomous breath of the serpent."[10] Saint Ephrem, that "she was immaculate, and remote from all stain of sin."[11] An ancient writer (Saint Fulgentius?), in a sermon, found amongst the works of Saint Augustine, on the words "Hail, full of grace," says, "By these words the angel shows that she was altogether [remark the word altogether] excluded from the wrath of the first sentence, and restored to the full grace of blessing."[12] The author of an old work, called the Breviary of Saint Jerome, affirms that "that cloud was never in darkness, but always in light."[13] Saint Cyprian, or whoever may be the author of the work on the 77th Psalm, says, "Nor did justice endure that that vessel of election should be open to common injuries; for being far exalted above others, she partook of their nature, not of their sin."[14] Saint Amphilochius, that "He who formed the first Virgin without deformity, also made the second one without spot or sin."[15] Saint Sophronius, that "the Virgin is therefore called immaculate, for in nothing was she corrupt."[16] Saint Ildephonsus argues, that "it is

[10] Nec serpentis venenosis afflatibus infecta est.—*Hom.* i. †

[11] Immaculata et intemerata, incorrupta et prorsus pudica, atque ab omni sorde ac labe peccati alienissima.—*Ad S. Dei Gen. Orat.*

[12] Cum dixit "gratia plena," ostendit ex integro, iram exclusam primæ sententiæ, et plenam benedictionis gratiam restitutam.—*Int. op. S. Augustini, Serm.* vii, *de Nat. Dom.*

[13] Nubem levem debemus sanctam Mariam accipere . . . Et deduxit eos in nube diei. Pulchre dixit, diei: Nubes enim illa non fuit in tenebris, sed semper in luce.—*Brev. S. Hieron. in Ps.* lxxvii.

[14] Nec sustinebat justitia, ut illud vas electionis communibus lassaretur injuriis; quoniam plurimum a cæteris differens, natura communicabat, non culpa.—*Lib. de Card. Op. Christi, de Nativ.*

[15] Qui antiquam illam virginem sine probro condidit; Ipse et secundam, sine nota et crimine fabricatus est.—*Orat. in S. Deip. et Simeon.*

[16] Virgo sancta accipitur, et anima corpusque sanctificatur; atque ita ministravit in incarnat'one Creatoris, ut munda et casta, atque incontaminata . . . Ex inviolabili namque et virginali sanguine atque immaculatæ Virginis Mariæ Verbum vere factum est incarnatum.—*Harduin*, tom. iii. Conc. Œcumen. 6, act. 11.

evident that she was free from original sin."[17] Saint John Damascene says that "the serpent never had any access to this paradise."[18] Saint Peter Damian, that "the flesh of the Virgin, taken from Adam, did not admit of the stain of Adam."[19] Saint Bruno affirms, "that Mary is that uncorrupted earth which God blessed, and was therefore free from all contagion of sin."[20] Saint Bonaventure, "that our Sovereign Lady was full of preventing grace for her sanctification; that is, preservative grace against the corruption of original sin."[21] Saint Bernardine of Sienna argues, that "it is not to be believed that He, the Son of God, would be born of a Virgin, and take her flesh, were she in the slightest degree stained with original sin."[22] Saint Lawrence Justinian affirms, "that she was prevented in blessings, from her very conception."[23] And the blessed Raymond Jordano, on the words "Thou hast found grace," says, "thou hast found a singular grace, O most sweet Virgin, that of preservation from original sin, &c."[24] And many other Doctors speak in the same sense.

But finally, there are two arguments that conclusively prove the truth of this pious belief. The first of these is the universal concurrence of the faithful. Father Egidius,

[17] Constat, eam ab omni originali peccato immunem fuisse.—*Cont. disp. de Virginit. B. V. M.*

[18] In hunc paradisum serpenti aditum non patuit.—*Or.* ii, *de Nat. B. M. V.*

[19] Caro . . . Virginis ex Adam assumpta, maculas Adæ non admisit.—*Serm. de Assump. B. M. V.*

[20] Hæc est . . . incorrupta terra illa, cui benedixit Dominus, ab omni propterea peccati contagione libera, per quam vitæ viam agnovimus, et promissam veritatem accepimus.—*In Ps.* ci.

[21] Domina nostra fuit plena gratia præveniente in sua sanctificatione, gratia scilcet præservativa contra fœditatem originalis culpæ.—*Serm.* ii, *de B. M. V.*

[22] Non est credendum, quod ipse Filius Dei voluerit nasci ex virgine, et sumere ejus carnem, quæ esset maculata ex aliquo peccato originali.—*Serm. in Feria,* iii, *post Pascha.*

[23] Ab ipsa namque sui conceptione, in benedictionibus est præventa.—*Serm. in Annunc. B. M. V.*

of the Presentation,[25] assures us that all the religious orders follow this opinion; and a modern author tells us that though there are ninety-two writers of the order of Saint Dominic against it, nevertheless there are a hundred and thirty-six in favor of it, even in that religious body. But that which above all should persuade us that our pious belief is in accordance with the general sentiment of Catholics is, that we are assured of it, in the celebrated bull of Alexander VII, "Sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarum," published in 1661, in which he says, "This devotion and homage towards the Mother of God was again increased and propagated . . . so that the universities having adopted this opinion (that is the pious one), already nearly all Catholics have embraced it."[26] And in fact this opinion is defended in the universities of the Sorbonne, Alcala, Salamanca, Coimbra, Cologne, Mentz, Naples, and many others, in which all who take their degrees are obliged to swear that they will defend the doctrine of Mary's Immaculate Conception. The learned Petavius mainly rests his proofs of the truth of this doctrine on the argument taken from the general sentiment of the faithful.[27] An argument, writes the most learned bishop Julius Torni,[28] which cannot do otherwise than convince; for in fact, if nothing else does, the general consent of the faithful makes us certain of the sanctification of Mary in her mother's womb, and of her Assumption, in body and soul, into heaven. Why then should not the same general feeling and

[24] Invenisti Virgo Maria, gratiam cælestem; quia fuerunt in te ab originis labe præservatio, &c.—*Contempl. de B. V. M.* cap. vi.

[25] *De Præs. V.* q. vi, a. 4. †

[26] Aucta rursus et propagata fuit pietas hæc et cultus erga Deiparam . . . ita ut accedentibus quoque plerisque celebrioribus Academiis ad hanc sententiam, jam fere omnes Catholici eam am plectantur.

[27] Tom. v, lib. 14, cap. 2, No. 10.

[28] *In Adn. ad Æst.* l. ii, dist. 3, No. 2. †

belief, on the part of the faithful, also make us certain of her Immaculate Conception?

The second reason, and which is stronger than the first, that convinces us that Mary was exempt from original sin, is the celebration of her Immaculate Conception commanded by the universal Church. And on this subject I see, on the one hand, that the Church celebrates the first moment in which her soul was created and infused into her body, for this was declared by Alexander VII, in the above-named bull, in which he says, that the Church gives the same worship to Mary in her Conception, which is given to her by those who hold the pious belief that she was conceived without original sin. On the other hand, I hold it as certain, that the Church cannot celebrate anything which is not holy, according to the doctrine of the holy Pope Saint Leo,[29] and that of the Sovereign Pontiff Saint Eusebius: "In the Apostolic See the Catholic religion was always preserved spotless."[30] All theologians, with Saint Augustine,[31] Saint Bernard,[32] and Saint Thomas, agree on this point, and the latter, to prove that Mary was sanctified before her birth, makes use of this very argument: "The Church celebrates the nativity of the Blessed Virgin; but a feast is celebrated only for a Saint: therefore the Blessed Virgin was sanctified in her mother's womb."[33] But if it is certain, as the angelic Doctor says, that Mary was sanctified in her mother's womb, because it is only on

[29] *Ep. Decret,* iv, c. 2. †

[30] In Sede Apostolica extra maculam semper est Catholica servata religio.—*Decr.* xxiv, No. 1, c. *in sede.* †

[31] *Serm.* clv. *et* cxiii. †

[32] *Ep. ad Can. Ludg.*

[33] Ecclesia celebrat nativitatem Beatæ Virginis: non autem celebratur festum in Ecclesia nisi pro aliquo sancto. Ergo Beata Virgo in ipsa sua nativitate fuit sancta. Fuit ergo in utero sanctificata.—3 p. Q. xxvii, art. 1.

that supposition that the Church can celebrate her Nativity, why are we not to consider it as equally certain that Mary was preserved from original sin from the first moment of her Conception, knowing as we do, that it is in this sense that the Church herself celebrates the feast?

The Grotto in 1914 and the church built in response to the Message of the Blessed Virgin through Bernadette

CHAPTER X

LOURDES *

When the dogma of the Immaculate Conception was proclaimed at Rome in 1854 there was, with the exception of Italy, no country of the world so enthusiastic in its rejoicing as Catholic France. It is true France had been devoted to the doctrine since the days when Duns Scotus argued in its favor seven centuries before at the Sorbonne. Was an answer to this to be seen on Heaven's part when, four years after Rome had promulgated the great dogma, she of whose incomparable privilege it was question said at the Lourdes Grotto: "I am the Immaculate Conception"? This is heaven's secret. In any case, the affirmation by the celestial visitant at Massabiello remains Heaven's sign-manual of the Lourdes Apparitions. * * * People were hoping that a message was being conveyed: and a message was being conveyed—one that was to illumine with fresh radiance the dogma proclaimed by the Catholic Church four years before.

In order that the reader may well understand the scene that was going on, it may be well to forestall Bernadette in the explanation she afterwards gave to the crowd. It may be remembered that in the course of the previous Apparitions she had, more than once, asked the celestial visitant to say who she was. This had been at the instigation of others, because in her child's heart she had never doubted as to the personality of her who conversed with her from the rock. For answer she had never received other than a gracious movement of the head and a smile. On this day of the Annunciation, praying, rosary in hand, and looking up, she tells us that suddenly she felt impelled to again ask the Apparition to say who she was. Conquering her hesitation, she did so, and received the same reply, namely, a smile and a gracious

* Taken from "The Blessed Virgin in the Nineteenth Century," by Bernard St. John, London, Burns & Oates, 1903.

movement of the head. She made the request a second time, and received the same answer. Still irresistibly impelled, as she says, she entreated a third time, and with joined hands and with all the intensity of which she was able. The answer came. It must be given in the child's own words:

"I had asked a third time," says Bernadette; "she seemed to become more serious and to wear a look of deeper humility. Then she joined her hands and raised them high against her breast. Then she cast her eyes upwards; then unfolding her hands and letting them slowly fall, and bending towards me, she said in a voice that trembled a little: *'I am the Immaculate Conception.'*"

Bernadette's voice trembled also as she repeated the words. More than this, in repeating them, she imitated, though perhaps unconsciously, the attitude and gesture of the Apparition.

Those who heard fell on their knees. A moment or two afterwards their feelings found expression in uttering as with one voice: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee!" A wave of strong emotion passed over the crowd. Numbers kissed the rock whence had proceeded the words: "I am the Immaculate Conception!"

The news sped like lightning that the Apparition had at length proclaimed herself, and that it was indeed Mary the Immaculate who had appeared at the Lourdes Grotto.

* * *

At length the Bishop of Tarbes spoke. His doctrinal decision came forth: it was published in January, 1862, and was to constitute a rock on which, humanly speaking, the Lourdes devotion was to be henceforward built. In the first article of this important document we read as follows:

"We judge that the Immaculate Mary, Mother of God, really appeared to Bernadette Soubirous on February 11th,

1858, and on succeeding days to the number of 18 times in the Grotto of Massabiello, close to the town of Lourdes."

In the second article we read to the following effect: "In order to act in conformity with the wish expressed more than once by the Blessed Virgin in the course of the Apparitions, we propose to erect a chapel on the site of the Grotto, which site is now the property of the Bishop of Tarbes." * * *

The crowds who help to fill Lourdes during the summer months take with them every variety of costume, from the quaint coifs of Brittany and Normandy to the snowy kerchiefs folded over the breasts of the women of Arles. There are people there from every clime in Europe. There all languages meet. There the sonorous Hosannahs, in honor of the Eucharist, may at times be heard ringing out in Italian and at others in German. At times, too, the volume of sound is swelled by "Faith of our Fathers," and "Hail, Star of the Sea," sung in English by a band of English pilgrims.

One of the striking features of the pilgrim life at Lourdes—so striking as to be almost phenomenal—is the Christian resignation and calm content of the great legion of uncured. These seem to understand to the full, though probably without ever having heard or read them, the Gospel words: "And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus, the prophet, and none of them were cleansed saving Naaman, the Syrian." *

In the way of description, the most cursory view of Lourdes would not be complete without a glance at the pile of buildings on the rock of Massabiello, which has been the Catholic world's response to the request for a "chapel," formulated by the Immaculate in one of her Apparitions to Bernadette. The crypt, hewn in great part out of the solid rock, was the first to take form. Then the basilica, in thir-

* Luke iv. 27.

teenth century style, grew above it. Then, below it, on ground level with that of the Grotto, rose the Church of the Rosary. This daring architectural attempt, in which various styles meet, seems, as seen in a general glance, to serve as a splendid base for the graceful basilica above. The originality of conception of the Rosary Church is carried out in the colossal semicircular double balustrades, which it throws forward, one on each side, which, to use a simile already applied to them, seem as arms wherewith to embrace the multitudes that gather within. These balustrades are built on arches and form two broad walks leading up to the basilica. As many as 35,000 persons can assemble within the enclosure which they form. The view in front is the Esplanade of the Rosary, a long vista of sward and trees.

The unique pile we are considering has been built at the expense of the Catholic world. Before leaving it we will glance within at its three separate parts.

The crypt is a very gem in stone, pervaded, as it seems, by a sort of mediæval glory, with its lancet windows, subdued colors, rich mosaics, and marvellous sidelights. The interior of the basilica charms by its effect of unity, as by the strength, simplicity and elegance of its pure Gothic. Banners from different countries, including England, hang around. Of the twelve lamps before the tabernacle, the center one is from Ireland. Above the high altar, of white-veined Carrara marble, there is a beautiful crowned statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, the crown being of gold and diamonds. At the feet of the statue lies a gold gemmed palm, the gift of Pius IX. In the Church of the Rosary, with its semi-gloom and roseate light thrown from on high, the visitor is attracted by the 15 chapels in honor of the 15 mysteries of the Rosary, all wrought in exquisite mosaics.

There is language in this three-fold temple raised to God's glory; it is the language of the Catholic world proclaiming

belief in the Lourdes Apparitions. The temple speaks another language also—that of the many thousand *ex-voto* tablets on its walls, proclaiming graces received and prayers answered.

This altogether unique pile is seen against an amphitheater of Pyrenean heights, against the majesty of eternal hills. The play of color on these hills is, in a general way, rather soft and subdued than brilliant, and is to be seen in beautiful effects of grey and green. But when nature here begins throwing on her carmines with a lavish hand, she knows how to incarnadine a whole mountain by a single stroke. The *Pic du Jer* is the highest summit around Lourdes. We remember to have seen, on a fine June evening, this height and its adjacent one suddenly crimsoned by a glow from the setting sun, the background the while being of deepest indigo. The glow, luminous, translucent, all-suffusing, and turning greys to purple, seemed of a radiance not of earth. No human artist could have thrown such colors on his canvas. The incarnadined mass was as of quivering, living, sentient.

The *Château Fort,* perched on its solitary rock, is one of Lourdes' picturesque features. For centuries the fortress was in the hands of the English. This means that this part of France was comprised in the rich heritage which Eleanor of Aquitaine took to the English crown.

But natural effects of sky and mountain, and striking features and historic considerations, sink into insignificance beside the incomparable religious beauty and grandeur of modern Lourdes. By modern Lourdes, we mean what pertains to the rock of Massabiello. There are other rocks in France with sacred memories attached to them, but none that we know of that, in less than half a century, has had time to become as polished marble by contact with the lips of innumerable multitudes. In all, Lourdes is a spot without

parallel in the Christian world. There, Gospel scenes are renewed as vividly as when the Gospel narrative was first enacted; there, is a Pool of Bethsaida needing no angel to move its waters; there, in His sacramental presence, Christ heals as He did in the days of His flesh.

"I Am the Immaculate Conception," painting in Mariana Library by Frederic de Henwod. Catholic University, Washington, D. C.

CHAPTER XI

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION*

"Thou art all fair, O my beloved, and there is no spot or slightest stain in thee."

These words are found in the Canticles of Solomon, and the holy Catholic Church applies them to the soul and body of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In the Scriptures the king addresses his spouse by these words. The king represents no other than the Almighty God, and surely, if among all the daughters of men, we ask ourselves, and who was the spouse of the Almighty God? we must immediately answer the Virgin Mother, who brought forth the eternal God, made man. Wherever, therefore, the Scriptures and inspired writings of the old law speak words of love, and denote attributes belonging to a spouse, these are directly applicable to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Now, among the many gifts and graces which the prophet beheld in her, and upon which he congratulates her, are these: he tells us that he saw her at the king's right hand in golden garb, surrounded with variety; that everything of beauty and loveliness was upon her; but, in addition to this, he tells us that a vision of such perfect purity, such perfect immaculateness rose before his eyes, that, filled with the Holy Ghost and the joy of God, he exclaimed, "Thou art fair, O my beloved, and there is no spot or slightest stain in thee."

Behold, then, dearly beloved, the first great grace that

*[Sermon delivered May 3d, 1872 by Father Thomas N. Burke, O. P. in the Dominican Church of St. Vincent Ferrer, New York City].

the Virgin of Virgins received at the first moment of her existence. When we reflect upon the relationship which the incarnation of our divine Lord established between the Blessed Virgin Mary and the Almighty God—namely, that she should be the Mother of God, that He, taking his sacred humanity from her, should be united to her so as to be the flesh of her flesh and the bone of her bone—that He was to be altogether hers, as the child belongs to the mother at birth—and in this new relation of His humanity He was not to suffer the slightest diminution of His own infinite sanctity which belonged to Him as God—when we reflect upon all this, and see the awful proximity in which a creature is brought to Almighty God in this mystery of man's redemption, the very first thought that strikes the mind is, I know God must have forfeited something of His holiness, or else the creature that He selected for His mother must have been all pure, all holy, and so fit to be the Mother of God—either God must have forfeited some of His holiness coming to one personally a sinner, taking tainted blood, the nature that belonged to us that He took in her, that which was a broken, a disfigured, and deformed nature, tainted with sin, and steeped, if you will, in sin—for what, after all, is the record of man's history but a record of sin—or Mary must have been sinless.

But if the Almighty God took that nature from one who bore in her own blood the personal taint of the universal sin, we must conclude that the Almighty God thereby compromised His own infinite holiness— nay, that He did more than this, that He contradicted His own word, for the word of God is, that nothing defiled, nothing tainted, shall come near to Almighty God. The soul that departs from this

world with the slightest taint of sin upon it must pay to the last farthing, and purge itself unto perfect purity before it can catch a glimpse of God in heaven. And if this immaculateness and purity be necessary in order even to behold God, Oh, think of the purity, then, of the immaculateness, that must have been necessary in order not only to behold God, but to take Him into her bosom, to give Him the very human life that He lived, to give Him the very nature that He took, and united to Himself in the unity of His own divine person—to give Him that humanity that He literally made Himself.

What infinite purity, what perfect innocence and immaculateness did these involve, unless, indeed, we are willing to conclude that the Almighty God came into personal contact with the sinner, and so allowed something not undefiled to come into contact with Him. But no; the mystery which brought so much suffering, so much humiliation, so much sadness and sorrow to the eternal Son of God, brought Him no compromise with sin, brought Him no defilement of His own infinite sanctity, not in the least lowering Him from that standard of infinite holiness which is His essence and nature as God. And, therefore, it was necessary that, coming to redeem a sinful race, the individual of that race from whom He took His most sacred humanity, should be perfectly pure and immaculate. More than this, we know that the Almighty God never yet called any creature to any dignity or to any office without bestowing upon that creature graces commensurate with the greatness, the magnificence, and the duties which he imposed upon him. Hence it is that we find when he was about to create the Prophet Jeremiah, when he was about to make him a prophet, to put his divine inspiration

into his mind, when he was about to send this man to announce his vengeance to the people, the Scriptures expressly tell us that he sanctified that man in his mother's womb before he was born, and that the infant prophet came into this world without the slightest taint of sin. Hear the words of Scripture: "The word of the Lord came to me, saying, Before I formed thee in thy mother's womb I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee and made thee a prophet unto the nations."

So, in like manner, when the Almighty God created a man who was to arrive at the highest dignity of the prophets—namely, not only to proclaim the coming of God, but to point out God amongst men in the person of Jesus Christ—John the Baptist, created for this high and holy purpose—created to be amongst men what Gabriel the archangel was to Mary—namely, the revealer of the divine counsels, God sanctified him in his mother's womb, and John the Baptist was born without sin. If the Almighty God sanctifies a man before his birth, anticipates the sacramental regeneration of circumcision, sanctifies him before the sacrament, as in the case of Jeremiah and John the Baptist, simply because that man was called to the office of proclaiming the word of God, Oh, dearly beloved, surely there must have been some distinctive sanctity, some especial grace in reserve for Mary, as much higher than the grace of the prophet or of the prevision of the Baptist, as Mary's office transcends theirs. Jeremiah had but to announce the word of God revealed to him. Mary it was who was to bring forth the word of God incarnate in her immaculate womb. John the Baptist was to point Him out and say, "Behold the Lamb of God." Mary was to hold Him in her arms and say to the world,

"This Lamb of God, who is to save all mankind, is my son."

And therefore it is, that as her office exceeded that of prophet, preacher, and precursor, as her dignity so far transcended anything that heaven and earth could ever know or imagine in a creature, so the Almighty God reserved her alone amongst all that He created upon this earth, that she should be conceived, as well as born, without sin—that that stream of sin which touched us all, and in its touch defiled us, should never come near and soil the immaculate Mary—that that sin which has mixed itself up in our blood in Adam, and, upon the stream of that blood, found its way into the heart-veins of every child of this earth, could never flow in the immaculate veins that furnished to Jesus Christ the blood in which He washed away the world's sin. Therefore the Alminghty God for this took thought and forethought from all eternity. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways, before he made anything from the beginning;" that is to say, in the divine and eternal counsels of the Almighty God, Mary arose in all the splendor, in all the immaculate whiteness of her sanctity and purity, the first, the grandest, and the greatest of all the designs of the eternal wisdom of God, because in her was to be accomplished the mystery of mysteries, the mystery that was hidden from ages with Christ in God—namely, the incarnation of the eternal Word.

Thus did the prophet behold her as she shone forth in the eternal counsels of God, when he looked up in that inspired moment at Patmos, and saw the heavens opened and all the glories of God revealed, there in the midst of the choirs of God's angels, there in the full blaze and effulgence of the light descending from the Father of Light, and exclaimed,

"I beheld, and lo! a great sign appeared in heaven—a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon beneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars." Who was this woman? Mark what follows, and you will know for yourselves. "And she brought forth a man-child who was to rule all nations with an iron rod; and her son was taken up to God and to His throne." Whom can she be but the woman that brought forth that man-child, Jesus Christ, the Son of God? Thus did the prophet behold her, the sign and promise of victory and of glory. And how significant are the mysterious words which follow, "and the serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman water, as it were a river, that he might cause her to be carried away by the river. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth." The earth swallowed up these fatal waters. The whole world was saturated with them, but they never touched the woman. And we behold in this mystery the immaculate conception, for I can call it nothing else than a mystery of Divine grace, and which is a triple triumph, namely, the triumph of God, the triumph of human nature, and Mary's own triumph and glory.

Consider these things, my friends. First of all, let us consider God's triumph in Mary. Recollect, dearly beloved, the circumstances that attended the fall and the sin of man. God made us in a perfect nature, perfect in its organization, perfect in its beautiful harmony, perfect in its origin, perfect in its eternal destiny, perfect in the freedom and the glory with which he crowned the unfallen man. "Thou hast made him little less than the angels, thou hast crowned him with honor and glory." Then came sin into this world, and

spoiled the beautiful work of God. All the fairest work of God was destroyed by Adam's sin. The integrity of our nature was injured. The harmony of our creation was disturbed. Bad passions and evil inclinations were let loose, and the soul, with its spiritual aspirations, its pure love, and unshackled freedom, became their slave. But although the devil triumphed over God in thus breaking, destroying, defiling and spoiling God's work in man, yet his triumph was not perfect. God wished still to vindicate Himself. God would not give His enemy a total and entire triumph over Him in the destruction and spoiling of His work. God took Mary aside and said, For her let there be no sin; for her let there be no soiling influence, for her no taint. He took her, in His eternal designs, into the bosom of His own infinite sanctity and omnipotent power, and whilst all our nature was destroyed, in her it retained its original purity, integrity, and beauty, in the one soul and body of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Thus we see the triumph of God; and here, it is worthy of remark, dearly beloved, that although in Scripture we often read of God's designs being frustrated, of God's work being overturned and spoiled by sin or some evil agency—yet it is never totally spoiled. God never gives a complete triumph to His enemy.

Thus, for instance, in the beginning, at the time of the deluge, all mankind were steeped in sin, and God, looking down from heaven, said: "I am sorry that I created this race, for My spirit is no longer among them." Yet, even then did the Almighty God reserve to Himself Noah and his children, and out of the whole race of mankind these were saved in purity and in sanctity, that God might not be utterly conquered by the devil. Again, when the Almighty God pre-

pared to rain down fire upon Sodom, He could not find ten holy men in the land. And yet, in the universal corruption, Lot and his family were saved. They were holy, where all else was unholy, and they preserved God in their hearts. Again, when the tribe of Benjamin was destroyed from amongst the other tribes of Israel, a few were saved, that God's work might not be utterly destroyed. And so the prophet, speaking of the Jewish people, says: "If the children of Israel were as the sands of the sea, yet a remnant shall be saved."

Thus it is that we find, invariably, that the Almighty God allows, in His wisdom and in His vengeance, the devil to go to a certain point, and to revel in destruction so far; but yet, suddenly He stays him. God stretches out His hand, and says to him: "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." This ought to be a great lesson to us in this our day. True, it seems to us in this our day that this devil of pride, this devil of infidelity, this devil of revolution, this devil of self-assertion, is let loose among the nations to play riot with the Church of God, to strike the crown from off the Pontiff's head, to pervert the ancient, faithful nations which has upheld him for centuries and make it the bitterest enemy of the Church, and to deprive the Head of the Church, for a time, of power. To-day, this devil runs riot in the world, shutting up Catholic Churches, expelling Jesuits, tainting the fountains of education, loosening the sacred bonds of marriage and of society, blaspheming Jesus Christ in the Eucharist, persecuting His priests and bishops and representatives upon earth. But we know that, at some moment or other, and when we least expect it—perhaps right in the mid career of its apparent glory—the terrible, invisible hand

will be put forth, and a voice will be heard, "No more—back! So far, in my vengeance, and so far, even in my mercy, I have allowed you. Back! Let there be peace."

And so the Almighty God triumphed even in the fall of Adam, which brought death into the world, polluted the blood, stirred up the passions, destroyed the equilibrium and harmony of human nature, and caused the very beasts of the forests to assume the savageness that they have to this day. All nature was tainted except that of Mary. Her, the hand of the omnipotent Lord held high above all attacks and attempts of her enemies, and in Mary God had triumphed, in that in her His glory has been preserved, she never having been tainted with or spoiled by sin. It is, also, the triumph of our nature. My friends, if Mary had not been conceived without sin, we might have been redeemed, we might have saved our souls, as we hope to do now; we might have gone up into the glory of heaven; but a perfect human being we never could have seen. Heaven would be a congregation of penitents if Mary were not there—tears upon their faces—but no tear upon thine, O Immaculate Mother! The blood of Jesus Christ upon the hands of all—no blood of Thy divine Son upon Thy immaculate hands, Oh Mary! The unfallen man would have been a thing of the past. Even in heaven, the representative of what God had made in Adam would be wanting if Mary were not there, and, therefore, our nature has triumphed in her. We may all look up to her in heaven, we may all contemplate her, and we may glorify our humanity in Mary without the slightest fear of pride or blasphemy against God, because the humanity that is in Mary, being conceived without sin, is worthy of all honor and of all glory. I will not compare

her in her immaculate conception with sinners; I will compare her with the saints, and behold how she towers above them. All sanctity, whether it be wrought out by years of penance, by fasting and mortification, by laborious efforts for the conversion of souls, by utter consecration and sacrifice to God, by martyrdom, by any form of sanctity, attains to but one thing, and that is perfect sinlessness and perfect purity of soul. Perfect sinlessness and perfect purity of soul mean perfect union by the highest form of divine love with Almighty God. God so loves us, dearly beloved, that He wishes to have us all together united to Him by that intimate union of the strongest and most ardent love. How is it that that union is not effected? Because of some little imperfection, some little sinfulness, some little crookedness in our souls, which keeps us from that perfect union of love with God. Now, the aim of all the saints is to attain to that ardent and perfect union with God by purging from their souls, from their bodies, from their affections, and from their senses, every vestige or inclination or even temptation to sin. When they have attained to that, God crowns their sinlessness with a perfect union of love, and they have attained to the acme or summit of their desires. It is here—precisely where all the saints have ended—here, precisely where all the saints, tired and fatigued with the labors of the upward journey, knelt down in blessed rest on the summit of Christian perfection—that Mary's sanctity begins; for in her immaculate conception, she was conceived without sin—no thought or shadow of thought to sin allied was ever allowed to fall upon the pure sunshine of her soul. No temptation to sin was ever allowed to quicken the pulsations of her sacred heart. Nothing of sin was ever allowed to

approach her. Entrenched in the perfect sinlessness of her immaculate conception, the moment she was conceived, she surpassed in sanctity—that is to say, in perfect sinlessness, and, consequently, in perfect union of love of God—all of the saints and angels in heaven. This is the meaning of the words in Scripture, where the prophet says: "Wisdom built unto itself a house, and the foundation thereof is laid upon the summits of the holy mountain. The Lord loveth the threshold of Sion more than the palaces and tabernacles of Judah." You know that every word of Scripture has a deep and God-like meaning. What meaning can these words have? Apply this to Mary's sanctity, we find the first moment of her existence upon the summit of the holy mountain—that is to say, her very first step in life—is dearer to the Lord than the palaces and tabernacles of Judah; that is, all the edifices of sanctity that were ever built up on this earth. This was the beginning—the conception of the woman who was destined to be the mother of God, made man. But, you may ask me, in that case, If she never sinned, even in Adam, surely she stood in no need of a Redeemer; surely she was the only one for whom it was not necessary that God should become man; God became man to redeem sinners—to save them; if this woman did not require redemption or salvation, why does she say in the Magnificat. "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God, my Saviour?" Well, my friends, she owes as much to the blood of Calvary as we do, and more. He was more her Saviour than ours. Whence came the grace of her immaculate conception? Whence came the power that kept her out of the way when all the rest of mankind was swept into this current of sin? It was her divine Son,

foreseen in the years of his humanity—foreseen by the eye of God's justice in the agony of His crucifixion; it was the blood that was shed upon Calvary to save us that saved Mary from ever being tainted with sin. Do you not know that the Almighty God may save in any way He likes? Do you not know, my friends, that the Almighty God is not bound to save this soul or that, in this or that particular way? For instance, the Almighty God appointed circumcision as the only way by which original sin was to be removed under the old law, and yet we know that He saved and sanctified Jeremias and John the Baptist without circumcision, and before; because, although circumcision was the ordinary way, Almighty God did not tie His hands, nor oblige Himself never to apply an extraordinary way. And so, wherever there is a human spirit made fit for heaven, that saving and that fitness is purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ, and by that alone. It saved Mary, as it saved us, only in a different manner; it saved us by falling upon our sinful heads in baptism—literally washing away the stain that was already there; it saved Mary by anticipating baptism, by removing her from the necessity of the sacrament, by anticipation. In us this blood of Jesus Christ is a cleansing grace; in Mary it was a preventing grace. She is saved as much as we are. For instance, suppose a wise prophet—a man that had a knowledge of the future—were to stand on the sea-shore, and see a number of persons about to embark on board a ship, leaving for a distant port, and that he said to one of them, "That ship is going to be shipwrecked; do not go on board," and the person followed his advice and was saved; the others went out on the ship, and it is wrecked, as was foretold; the prophet is there, by some

mysterious means, and saves them all. He is as much the savior of the person who stayed on shore as of those he saved on the vessel after it was wrecked. And so it is with God. He took Mary aside, and His spirit overshadowed her, and He saved her. Oh, how gloriously does God save her! how magnificently He vindicated Himself in her! how kindly and mercifully he preserved one specimen of our pure and unbroken nature in her! Well might He hold her forth, as it were, in His hand, to frighten the devil, even on the day of his triumph, when he said: "The woman, O spirit of evil, whom thou knowest well, will crush thy head." Mary was the terror of hell from the beginning, because hell was afraid, from the beginning, of the pure, unfallen nature of man, and that was saved only in her.

Let us, therefore, meditate upon these things, and, giving thanks to God for all He did, for the greatest boon of mercy to our race—in that God so sanctified a creature that she might be worthy to approach him—endeavor, in our own humble way, by purifying our souls, putting away from us our sins, and by weeping over the follies and errors that we have allowed to come upon our souls, thus fit ourselves, that at some immeasurable distance we too may be able to approach Him and Mary, the Holy Mother of God.

PART II

PIUS XI

D. Villares—Crypt, National Shrine, Catholic University, Washington, D. C.

FOREWORD TO PART II

Since the majority of our readers will be those of the English tongue, we deemed it advisable to give in Part I the English rendering of the complete text of the *Ineffabilis Deus,* together with descriptive accounts, by eye witnesses, of the actual declaration of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception, with suitable historical and doctrinal expositions touching on the dogma itself.

For the benefit of students and readers of other tongues than English, we present in Part II the dogma in the original Latin with a corresponding Irish text, followed by extracts, historical, dogmatic and devotional, in Spanish, French, Italian, Latin and German. In order to give some of these texts in the original it was necessary to retain certain archaic forms and expressions. But in such a case we feel the reader will be fully compensated by having an exact reproduction of the learned author's work.

FATHER LUKE WADDING, O.F.M.
From original painting in St. Isadore's Convent, Rome

CHAPTER XII

INEFFABILIS DEUS
LATIN-IRISH

PIUS EPISCOPUS
SERVUS SERVORUM DEI,
Ad perpetuam rei memoriam.

NEFFABILIS Deus cujus, viæ misericordia et veritas, cujus voluntas omnipotentia, et cujus sapientia attingit a fine usque ad finem fortiter et disponit omnia suaviter, cum ab omni æternitate præviderit luctuosissimam totius humani generis ruinam ex Adami transgressione derivandam, atque in mysterio a sæculis abscondito primum suæ bonita-

pius episcopus
serbíseać ajʒ serbisiʒíb de,
ċum buaŋ-ċuiṁne aṁ an nid ro.

Do Dia an do-luadta a ṫrubalar a m-beallaiʒíb na cṁócaiṁé aʒur na ṫíṁne, aʒur aiʒ a b-ṫuil toil uile-cuṁaċtaċ, aʒur ʒo ṫreiṫeann ʒo rocaiṁ péiṁ a ċṁíonaċta o 'n deine ṫoiṁ ʒo d-ti an deine ṫiar de 'n ʒ-cruinne ʒo h-iomlán, aiʒ cuiṁ ʒo ṫáṁ ʒaċ nid ann a áit ṫéin, bud leur ó ċur na ṫíoṁnuideaċta an creaċ cṁaidte a ṫíolṁóċad aiṁ an ʒ-ciṁne daonna ʒo léiṁ ó ṫeacad Adaiṁ. Aiṁ ṫead na ʒ-cianta do ċeil re núi a ṁinne re ann doiṁneaċt a ċnoide ṫéin, bail a ċuiṁ aiṁ an ʒ-ceud obair a ċainic ó laṁaib a ṁaiṫeara, le ʒleur diaṁaṁ eile ni bud ionʒanṫaiʒe, tre ionnċolnuʒad an Briaṫar diadа, ionnor nać b-ṫuiʒead an

tis opus decreverit per Verbi incarnationem sacramento occultiore complere, ut contra misericors suum propositum homo diabolicæ iniquitatis versutia actus in culpam non periret, et quod in primo Adamo casurum erat in secundo felicius erigeretur, ab initio et ante sæcula unigenito Filio suo Matrem, ex qua caro factus in beata temporum plenitudine nasceretur, elegit atque ordinavit, tantoque præ creaturis universis est prosequutus amore, ut in illa una sibi propensissima voluntate complacuerit. Quapropter illam longe ante omnes angelicos Spiritus, cunctosque Sanctos cœlestium omnium charismatum copia de thesauro divinitatis deprompta ita mirifice cumulavit, ut Ipsa ab omni prorsus peccati labe semper libera, ac tota pulchra et perfecta, eam innocentiæ et sanctitatis plenitudinem præ se ferret, qua major sub Deo nullatenus intelligitur, et quam præter Deum nemo assequi

duine, a mealaḋ agur a tuit go milteaċ a b-peacaḋ, faoi dianar an diabail a ċlaoid é le cealg agur cluan-beart, bár ríomhaide, ann aṁdeoin intinne trócaillidhe an Áird-rígh a ċruṫuigh é: agur ionoḋ go m-beidheaḋ an tuitim ud do ṫarluigh le linn Ádaimh, 'na áḋbar éirigthe nior feunmhainne ain teaċt an dara Ádaimh, ir uime sin, a d-toirċeaċ na faoghal agur nomh na g-cianta do ṫoḃ re Dhaṫain d' a aon-mhac, agur, mar buḋ cóir, do ċuir ann ordughaḋ í, mar an duine a bi le colann daonna a ṫabairt Dhó, agur a g-comhlíonaḋ beannuighthe na n-am, le n-a bheiṫ ó n-a bhunn uarail; agur do ghná-

dhuigh fé í or cionn gaċ creatúir le fearg-ghnaḋ fannaċ, fíor-buan, ċo dilis sin, gur. annsi-ri amhain fuair an teann-dúil agur an cumann, caoin caiṫeanaċ a líon a ċnoidhe a láin-fearaḋ. Air an aḋbar sin, le tuilleaḋ móir na n-uil-ghnáṫa neamhda, noċ do ṫóg fé ar lán-tóir a diaḋaċta do líon Sé a h-anam le ionduala ċt troḋlacaiḋ a b-fad roimh' an meid aingidh agur deagh-Spíoraid tá ann neamh, agur naoimh ann talamh; agur do mheudaigh i a faiḋbheap na rubailceaḋ ann mod ċo iongantaċ, gur naib rí ó ṫus féin go buan gan béim, agur go ballaċ faon, glan ó fal ann bis peacaiḋ; agur gur naib rí aluin, fgéimhaċ, agur ann gaċ mod foillsé, fóin-mhaireaċ; agur gur iomċuin rí líonmhaiaċt naomhta na caiṫeanaċta agur na caiḋaċta naċ naib a leiṫeaḋ eile faoi Dhia le fágail; agur naċ reidir le creatúir ann bis ácht

cogitando potest. Et quidem decebat omnino, ut perfectissimæ sanctitatis splendoribus semper ornata fulgeret, ac vel ab ipsa originalis culpæ labe plane immunis amplissimum de antiquo serpente triumphum referret tam venerabilis mater, cui Deus Pater unicum Filium suum, quem de corde suo æqualem sibi genitum tanquam seipsum diligit, ita dare disposuit, ut naturaliter esset unus idemque communis Dei Patris et Virginis Filius, et quam ipse Filius substantialiter facere sibi matrem elegit, et de qua Spiritus Sanctus voluit, et operatus est, ut conciperetur et nasceretur ille, de quo ipse procedit.

Dia é féin cuimhniúghadh ann a inntleacht, méid a h-uairleacta agus a mór-éimhé. Agus go cinnte bud cóir go m-beidead re aithlaidh ait gach caoi, re rin, ó bí rí gleurta a g-comhuighe ann eudaighibh geal na canéanacta, go rgeicead rí gloinne mór naomhtacta uaithi; agus leir rin, ó bí rí raon glan ó peacadh na rinnir féin, go b-ruighead rí go ballach buaidh, buan, beannachtach or cionn an an-Spioraid,—an Athair óirdeirc ud a bí ón cáidh, cumanach aig Dia an athair gur mhian leir a aon-mhac, noch a geineadh ó n-a uéit dhaha agus a bí co-ionnann leir féin, agus ait a naibh gnáth agus geall a chroidhe man ait féin rion raidhte, a bhronnadh aithírri ait mod go m-beidead re a néin nadúrra 'na aon-mhac dilir coitcheann acca le chéile—Dia an Athair agus an Mhaighdean Mhuire:—an buime ro do thog Dia an Mhac a dheanadh 'nna Mhathair néin nadúrra daona Dhó-féin; agus b' í-re an bean a bí ceapuighte amach aig an Spioraid Naomh le gabail ann a bronn néin a thola agus a oibriughte, agus le túirmughadh an Te ud ar a éiriughenn re féin amach.

QUAM originalem augustæ Virginis innocentiam cum admirabili ejusdem sanctitate præcelsaque Dei Matris dignitate omnino cohæ-

An t-ionnacar rinneanach ro na Maighdine glórmhaithe a tá go dluth fighte faoi aon dealb le n-a naomhacht ionmholta agus le n-a and-céim óirdeirc mar Mhathair Dé, do bí a g-comhuidhe 'nn a chraob chneidhe aig an Easlait Catholicach, noch a tá go rion faoi rtiúradh agus teagarg an

rentem Catholica Ecclesia, quæ a Sancto semper edocta Spiritu columna est ac firmamentum veritatis, tamquam doctrinam possidens divinitus acceptam, et cœlestis revelationis deposito comprehensam multiplici continenter ratione, splendidisque factis magis in dies explicare, proponere, ac fovere nunquam destitit. Hanc enim doctrinam ab antiquissimis temporibus vigentem, ac fidelium animis penitus insitam, et sacrorum Antistitum curis studiisque per Catholicam orbem mirifice propagatam, ipsa Ecclesia luculentissime significavit, cum ejusdem Virginis Conceptionem publico fidelium cultui ac venerationi proponere non dubitavit. Quo illustri quidem facto ipsius Virginis Conceptionem veluti singularem, miram, et a reliquorum hominum primordiis longissime secretam, et omnino sanctam colendam exhibuit, cum Ecclesia nonnisi de

Spíonaíd Naoim, agus a tá mar bun agus plé[i]n na fírinne, an teagarg ro do tugad dí ó neam le reilb, agus do cnaobrgaolad dí ameargg a lán eile, an teagarg ceadna ro do mínigh rí do 'n doman mór agus do dearbuigh rí le fearcaib follusa agus le gníomaibh glórmhara, agus go fóill aniam nío[n] fuinne rí fóraḋ 'g a mínugaḋ; 'g a dearbaḋ agus 'g a buanaḋ nío[n] mo 'na a céile gach aon lá. Ir cnaob cneidiṁ é atá faoi cnuc a'r blac ó 'n am ir anra a g-céim, agus aig a b-fuil fneum doimin ann anamnaib na b-fíneun, agus a ta, faoi cúram cumanac agus diéidoll tear-ghiaḋac na n-Carpoz a rgeiceaḋ a ríol' ain mod iongantac éirid an cruinne Catoilicaċ. Do éug an Eaglair í féin le n-aiéinugaḋ go roillén, cad é ir barramail leice ain, 'nuair nac naib ceo de leirg oiéi, féile a cur ain bun an oinóin "Geinamuinte" na naoim Mairdine, cum go d-tabarfaḋir na fíneun áduaḋ agus áltugaḋ do Dia mar geall ain, mar aon le oinóin agus mod mór do 'n Mairdin í féin. Buḋ tairbanaḋ roillén go dearbéa é ro do rinne Eaglair De a tabairt ain Geinamuin na h-Oige, gur buḋ eug-raimlac, iongantac í, agus euluigée a b-faḋ ó gnár ríolnuigée no tuirmigte tá nadurda ameargg clainne daonna, agus ain gac caoi naoiméa agus ion-áltuigée, óir ní cuirfeann an Eaglair féile ain bun, no a conzbail 'nna faoi[n]a, acé ann

Sanctis dies festos concelebret. Atque idcirco vel ipsissima verba, quibus divinæ Scripturæ de increata Sapientia loquuntur, ejusque sempiternas origines repræsentant, consuevit tum in ecclesiasticis Officiis, tum in sacrosancta Liturgia adhibere, et ad illius Virginis primordia transferre, quæ uno eodemque decreto cum divinæ Sapientæ incarnatione fuerant præstituta.

QUAMVIS autem hæc omnia penes fideles ubique prope recepta ostendant, quo studio ejusmodi de Immaculata Virginis Conceptione doctrinam ipsa quoque Romana Ecclesia, omnium Ecclesiarum mater et magistra, fuerit prosequuta, tamen illustria hujus Ecclesiæ facta digna plane sunt, quæ nominatim recenseantur, cum tanta sit ejusdem Ecclesiæ dignitas, atque auctoritas, quanta illi omnino debetur, quæ est catholicæ veritatis et

oṅóll na Naoṁ aṁáin. Agus ailt an ádbar sin, is gnáċaċ leiċe ann a cuid leigean águs ann a naoṁ-litiriġa na focla céadna a leigeaḋ le a labarann an Sgríobaiṅ diaḋa ailt an Tuigse neaṁ-chuċuigṫe, agus le a tráċtar áill a ṡníoṁ-buanaḋ ó ṫus na ṡíonnuiḋaċta, agus na bráċa céadna a ċuill a leiṫ ṗníoṁ-beaċa na Maigdine Maċar, aig tarbanaḋ leis an gnáṫ sin, gur b' ionann an t-aċt le'n ceap Dia ṡe amaċ, agus le'n deanbuiġ Se go nglacfaḋ an Tuigse diaḋa colann daonna.

Gid go tairbanann go maiṫ iomlan na neiċe so a tá a g-cnoide agus a g-cleaċtaḋ aig na ṡíneun a m-bíaiṫe gaċ áit, an rún dainġean bí go síor aig an Eaglais Roṁanaċ—ata 'nna maċain agus 'nna maġistrean or cionn eaglais na cruinne,—an chéideaṁ so taob cáid-ġeinṁaine na Maigdine a ċur ailt aġaiḋ, 'nna déig sin is fiu na gnóṁaiṫe gloinneaċa do rinne an eaglais ṁearaṁail so, go n-déanfaiḋe coṁur ailt leiṫ a ṫabairt onna, ó ṫainic go b-fuil áiḋ-ṁéin agus bainntar na h-eaglaise céadna so co móṁ sin, a'r is ceart dí faġail ailt gaċ caoi, mar is ri bun agus ceannlan na ṡíninne catoilicigṫe agus aonḋaċta í, agus is annsi-re aṁáin a cuiṁniġaḋ gan clisḋ an chaibdeaċt, agus go b-fuil se riaċtanaċ do gaċ eaglais eile tarrainġ uaiṫi-se, aṁail ar cnan, ruġ agus úr-far an

unitatis centrum, in qua solum inviolabiliter fuit custodita religio, et ex qua traducem fidei reliquæ omnes Ecclesiæ mutuentur oportet. Itaque eadem Romana Ecclesia nihil potius habuit quam eloquentissimis quibusque modis Immaculatam Virginis Conceptionem, ejusque cultum et doctrinam asserere, tueri, promovere et vindicare. Quod apertissime planissimeque testantur et declarant tot insignia sane acta Romanorum Pontificum Decessorum Nostrorum, quibus in persona Apostolorum Principis ab ipso Christo Domino divinitus fuit commissa suprema cura atque potestas pascendi agnos et oves, confirmandi fratres, et universam regendi et gubernandi Ecclesiam.

fíon-chéidhmh. Agus is uime sin nach maith dhó ain bhé a b' anfa leis an Ghaidhlig Romhanach céadna 'na le uil-ghuc agus un-labhairt agus ain gach uile chaoi a b' fhéadh, gle—gheinamhuin na maighdine mar aon le n-a onóir agus an teagasg so 'nn a leigt, a dearbhughadh, a chruthughadh, a cur ain agaidh agus a coraint. Mhan tairbhanadh foillégh agus fiadhnaise follusach ain so, tá againn go deimhin a lán acta iongantacha a rinne ard-Carpoig na Roimhe a bí riomhainnne ann, agus da b-tuig ó neimh anuas a b-Peadhra Phionra na n-Apstol Chriost an d-Tighearna é fein ard-churam agus cumhacht na h-uain agus na caoraigh a beathughadh, a bhaithe a co-neartughadh 'san g-cheidheamh, agus an Ghaidhlig ain fad a rothradh agus a riaghail.

NIMVERO Prædecessores Nostri vehementer gloriati sunt Apostolica sua auctoritate festum Conceptionis in Romana Ec-

Dar go deimhin bud ádhbar glóire móire aig na Páparaidh a bí ann Romhainn, feile gheinamhuine na Mhaighdine a cur ain bun faoi n-a m-bathantar apstolach ain fead na h-Ghaidhlige Romhánaighe; agus é a ándughadh agus a dhéanadh onórach aig bhionadh ain, oirighé ain leis agus airithin ain leis, le'n dearbhaighadh

clesia instituere, ac proprio Officio, propriaque Missa, quibus prærogativa immunitatis ab hæreditaria labe manifestissime asserebatur, augére, honestare, et cultum jam institutum omni ope promovere, amplificare sive erogatis indulgentiis, sive facultate tributa civitatibus, provinciis, regnisque, ut Deiparam sub titulo Immaculatæ Conceptionis patronam sibi dilîgerent, sîve comprobatis Sodalitatibus. Congregationibus, Religiosisque Familiis ad Immaculatæ Conceptionis honorem institutis, sive laudibus eorum pietati delatis, qui monasteria, xenodochia, altaria, templa sub Immaculati Conceptus titulo erexerint, aut sacramenti religione interposita Immaculatam Deiparæ Conceptionem strenue propugnare spoponderint. Insuper summopere lætati sunt decernere Conceptionis festum ab omni

or comṁaiṁ an domṁain eagṙamṁlaċt na h-óiġe ċaṁ cáċ, agur a glé-ġleaċt ó gaċ ṙal rinriṁeaċ: Agur a d-taob an ṁéid a bí ċeanna aṁ bun ann a h-onóiṁ, do riṁnadaṁ a n-diċċioll a leaṫanuġaḋ agur a buanaḋ,—ma'r aiġ bṫonaḋ loġa, no mar aiġ ṫabaiṁt ceaḋ do caṫnaċaiḃ agur do cuiġiḃ agur do riġaċtaiḃ noġan a ḋeanaḋ de Mhaṫaiṁ Dé, le beiṫ aca 'nna mnaoicuiṁiṁce agur 'nna taca, ṙaoi ainm agur cáil, "na maiġdine a gaḃaḋ gan ṙeacaḋ;"—no ma 'r aiġ bṫonaḋ beannaċta, agur aiġ guide bail agur blaṫ aiṁ ḋáiliḃ agur aiṁ ċriṁniġéiḃ, no, ṁuinṫiṁ aiṁ bíṫ riaġalta a ċuiṁ ṙuṫa ann onóiṁ na h-oiġe a geinead gan cáin; no aṁṁ aiġ rgeiṫ molta aiṁ ċnaḃaḋ 'an ḃneamna a d'aṁduiġ ṙaoi rgiaṫ na h-óg-mna cáide monairteiriḋ, oċaṁ-tiġṫe, altóiriḋ, cilléˊ, agur teampuill; no aiṁ an ṁuinṫiṁ ṙaoi ond naoṁṫa a riṁne gealladh, caiḋ-ġeinaṁuin Mhaṫaiṁ Dé a ċorṁuġaḋ go cnoḋa agur go buan ann aġaiḋ gaċ naṁaiḋ. 'Nna ċeann rin bí luaṫ-ġáiṁ anṁóṁ onta oiḋuġaḋ a ṫabaiṁt go uġdaṁaṙaċ go m-beiḋeaḋ an t-rolaṁuin céadna aiṁ péile geinaṁuine na maiġdine ṫriḋ Eaglaiṁ Dé go h-iomlán ṙaoi an cáil agur an ṁeaṁ ceadna a'r tá aiṁ lá péile an nodlaiġ péin; agur ṙeaṁ a'r báṁ, go m-beiḋeaḋ aiṁ ṙeaḋ na h-eaglaire peile Naoiṁ Mhuire noiṁ

Ecclesia esse habendum eodem censu ac numero, quo festum Nativitatis, idemque Conceptionis festum cum octava ab universa Ecclesia celebrandum, et ab omnibus inter ea quæ præcepta sunt, sancte colendum, ac Pontificiam Capellam in Patriarchali Nostra Liberiana Basilica die Virginis Conceptioni sacro quotannis esse peragendam. Atque exoptantes in fidelium animis quotidie magis fovere hanc de Immaculata Deiparæ Conceptione doctrinam, eorumque pietatem excitare ad ipsam Virginem sine labe originali conceptam colendam, et venerandam, gavisi sunt quam libentissime facultatem tribuere, ut in Lauretanis Litaniis, et in ipsa Missæ Præfatione Immaculatus ejusdem Virginis proclamaretur Conceptus, atque adeo lex credendi ipsa supplicandi lege statueretur. Nos porro tantorum Prædecessorum vestigiis inhærentes, non solum quæ ab ipsis pientissime sapiendo laic faoi folamhuin oct lá; agus go n-deanfaidh na fírneun an lá féin a coingbail 'nna faofna mór mar na féilte eile ain a b-fuil ré d' aitheé ofaidhn faoi fian peacaidh a g-coingbail 'un a faofna; agus 'nna ceann fin, go m-beidheadh gach uile bhagan co-dhail or comhair an Papa chuin ann rígh-teampail uaralachtach Liberianach ain an lá a tá 'nn a féilé naomhta ann ónóir na Haigdine a gabadh gan peacadh. Agus arís, le dul an teagarg ro taobh caidhgeinamhuinè Mhachair De a néarthughadh, nior mhó gach lá 'na ceile, ann anamnaibh na b-fíreun, agus a n-diamhóid a bhfortughadh cum onóire agus glóire na Haigdine "a gabadh gan peacadh na fíorfhíné,"—d' ádhbar mór luach-gairé dóibh ceadh a bhonnadh go fonnmhar, a cáil a fgeich agus í a adhbhail annsa na hiodain labhratanaigh agus annsan fóill-poinn de 'n naom aifrinn, mar "an Haigdean a gabadh gan peacadh," ionnsuidhe go m-beidheadh an riaghail le a n-déantar unnaighe 'na riaghail aig bhfortughadh cheidhm. Aig leanamhuin mar fin go dluth ann lonn an méid Sarpog a cuaidh romhainn, ní fe amhain gur mholamar agus gur glacamar an meud a deanbuighdar go gnádach agus go h-eagnach, acht 'na ceann fin,—aig congbail a meamhair leachtain no buan-fgnibhé Sixtus IV.—do dairgnigheamar ghe an cumhacht aighdarach tá againn faoi lamh oifige ain leith ann onóir "Haigdine; agus

entissimeque fuerant constituta probavimus, et recepimus, verum etiam memores institutionis Sixti IV. proprium de Immaculata Conceptione Officium auctoritate Nostra munivimus, illiusque usum universæ Ecclesiæ lætissimo prorsus animo concessimus.

QUONIAM vero quæ ad cultum pertinent, intimo plane vinculo cum ejusdem objecto conserta sunt, neque rata et fixa manere possunt, si illud anceps sit, et in ambiguo versetur, idcirco Decessores Nostri Romani Pontifices omni cura Conceptionis cultum amplificantes, illius etiam objectum ac doctrinam declarare et inculcare impensissime studuerunt. Etenim clare aperteque docuere, festum agi de Virginis Conceptione, atque uti falsam, et ab Ecclesiæ mente alienissimam proscripserunt illorum opinionem, qui non Conceptionem ipsam, sed

le ur-ġáṁdeaċar cṁoíde do ḋeonuiġmar do 'n Ġaźlaiṫ tṁíd an doṁan a úraíd agus a ċleactaḋ.

Acᵗ ó ṫaṁla go b-fuilid na neiṫe a baineaṫ leiṫ an oṅórugaḋ agus an aḋrad fíġte go follus faoi aon dluṫ le n-a n-áḋbar, agus go b-fuil an oṅórugaḋ mar inneaċ faoi aon fuinneaḋ leiṫ, agus naċ d-tíg leo cur le·ċeile an aon deilḃ dainġean, diamḟar, ma tá an t-oíġe faon, no ġan fuiṁ, ir uime sin bi re 'nna ċuramh ḟóṁ ais na h-earboíg a bi ṁainn ais ċaṫaoir naoiṁ Pea-

dair, ċo maiṫ a'r bídar aig déanaḋ an ṁéid bi ann a gcuiṁniġṫ onóir do'n "naoiṁ ġeinamain" a ṁeuduġaḋ;—an t-áḋbar a bi leiṫ a ṁúnaḋ annsan an éadna, agus an fíor-teaġarġ ann a leiṫ a noċtuġaḋ agus a ṁínuiġaḋ go duṫraċtaċ. Oir do ṁuinntir go roilléir agus go glinn, gur mar geall air ġeinamain na Haíġdhe bi an lá faoina air bun; agus do dhiúltuiġdar mar breugaċ agus a b-fad eilimiġte ó inntin na h-Ġaźlairge barramhail an dreama a faoil agus a dubairt naċ é "geinamain," na h-oíġe, aċt a

sanctificationem ab Ecclesia coli arbitrarentur et affirmarent. Neque mitius cum iis agendum esse existimarunt, qui ad labefactandam de Immaculata Virginis Conceptione doctrinam, excogitato inter primum atque alterum Conceptionis instans et momentum discrimine, asserebant, celebrari quidem Conceptionem, sed non pro primo instanti atque momento. Ipsi namque Prædecessores Nostri suarum partium esse duxerunt et beatissimæ Virginis Conceptionis festum, et Conceptionem pro primo instanti tanquam verum cultus objectum omni studio tueri ac propugnare. Hinc decretoria plane verba, quibus Alexander VII Decessor Noster sinceram Ecclesiæ mentem declaravit inquiens: "Sane vetus est "Christi fidelium erga ejus "beatissimam Matrem Virgi- "nem Mariam pietas sentien- "tium, ejus animam primo in- "stanti creationis, atque infu- "sionis in corpus fuisse speciali "Dei gratia et privilegio, in- "tuitu meritorum Jesu Christi

naomhad a bi aig fagail onóire agus altuighe ó 'n Eaglais. Agus nior nabadar nior maola aig tnaćtail leis an mhuintir eile, a fhaoil,—aig cur baill eidir-dealbhaigh, no teoran, eidir an ceud mhomhéid agus an dara mhómhéid le fonn gle-ghineamhain na maighdine a cur air lar,—an baramhail ro a deanad follus, gur tuigad onóir agus árd-luad do ghinamhain na Mhaighdine, act ni air an g-ceud ponc no mhomhéid ann an gabad i. Acht leis rin do mearadar na Papaidh a bi ann nomhainn-nhé, gur naib fe d' ualać onta, co fada a'r b' feidir le n-a g-cumhact, ni amhain feilé gle-ghenamhuine na Mhaighdine beannuighte, acht an ghenamhain rin o'n g-ceud mhomhéid, mar fheum agus fíor-adhbar na h-onóire agus an árd-luad, a coimheud agus a corainn go cruda. Uime rin, tá againn na bhfiaćana ughdaraća ro le'r d' fhoillrigh an Papa Alirtir VII., intin na h-Eaglaise aig rad:

"Go dearbća ir fear-dheamhóid na cinnteaidh do 'n Mhaighdin Mhuire naomh mathair Dé, an bamhail tá aca gur cumhuighadh a h-anam an ceud mhomhéid ann an cruthuighadh é agus an feudad arteać é ann a colann, faor glan ó gać rmal peacaidh na rinnirné tre ghrása rpeirialta agus fear-dlighe ó Dia, agus tre luaighteact luać-raoćan Jora Chriost a mic, fuargaltóra an éinne daonna, agus leis an intin ro beithidh onóir agus déanaidh rolamhain mhor air la feile na Mhaighdine romh nodlaic."

"ejus Filii humani generis
"Redemptoris, a macula peccati originalis præservatam im-
"munem, atque in hoc sensu ejus Conceptionis festivitatem so-
"lemni ritu colentium, et celebrantium."*

TQUE illud in primis solemne quoque fuit iisdem Decessoribus Nostris doctrinam de Immaculata Dei matris Conceptione sartam tectamque omni cura, studio et contentione tueri. Etenim non solum nullatenus passi sunt, ipsam doctrinam quovis modo a quopiam notari, atque traduci, verum etiam longe ulterius progressi perspicuis declarationibus, iteratisque vicibus edixerunt, doctrinam, qua Immaculatam Virginis Conceptionem profitemur, esse, suoque merito haberi cum ecclesiastico cultu plane consonam, eamque veterem, ac prope universalem et ejusmodi, quam Romana Ecclesia sibi fovendam, tuendamque susceperit, atque omnino dignam, quæ in sacra ipsa Liturgia, solemnibusque precibus usur-

Agus re an rud ir mo bí ag—comhuighe 'na adbar cuireamha aig na h-earpoig bí romhainn, an cheideamh ro taob gle-ghealmhuine Athar Dé a congbháil cumdughte, agus le fonn agus dlaghár a coraint go hiriadarach. Óir ní re amháin nar leigadar a riamh d' aon neach cor air bith dhoc-fhocal a ráth no fheul a cuir amach ann aghaidh an cheidimh ro, act do cuadar nior fhaide go mór: le follrighadh aig or ard, airí agus go minic, do chaob-fhaoiladar do'n domhan mór go raib an cheideamh thé a admhaighmid gle-ghealmhúin na Athaighne, co-ionann, agus gur cóir go m-beideadh an cáil agus an clu fin air, d'a bárr fein,—do beit go foilleir co-ionann le naomh-teagarg na h-Eaglaise, agus gur cheideamh arfa é bí a m-bráithe, gach cinn chíd an domhan mór, agus co ion-mhearta fin, gur coig an Eaglaise Romhanach airidh fein a cumdughadh agus a coraint; agus gur b' fin é air gach caoi áit fághail annsan naomh Liturgia agus annsna urnaighe b' ionmhearda. Agus nior nabadar fárta leis an meud ro,—act ionnor go m-beideadh an cheideamh taob caidh-ghealmhuine fearmhac, flán, gan baoghal chirte go buan, cughadar ordughadh uirnidh-

* Alexander VII, Const. *Sollicitudo omnium Ecclesiarum*, VIII. Decembris 1661.

paretur. Neque his contenti, ut ipsa de Immaculato Virginis Conceptu doctrina inviolata persisteret, opinionem huic doctrinæ adversam sive publice, sive privatim defendi posse severissime prohibuere, eamque multiplici veluti vulnere confectam esse voluerunt. Quibus repetitis luculentissimis declarationibus, ne inanes viderentur, adjecere sanctionem: quæ omnia laudatus Prædecessor Noster Alexander VII his verbis est complexus:

NOS consideran-
"tes, quod Sanc-
"ta Romana Ec-
"clesia de In-
"temeratæ semper
"Virginis Mariæ Con-
"ceptione festum so-
"lemniter celebrat, et speci-
"ale ac proprium super hoc,
"officium olim ordinavit jux-
".ta piam, devotam, et lauda-
"bilem institutionem, quæ
"a Sixto IV Prædecessore
"Nostro tunc emanavit; vo-
"lentesque laudabili huic pie-
"tati et devotioni, et festo,
"ac cultui secundum illam ex-

arac gan an banamail eile a bí 'cuill ann aġaiḋ an chéidiḋ ro, a corainnt aiġ or-áiḋ no aiġ or ífíoll; agur do buḋ maiṫ leo go n-euġpaḋ fé ann pad bunúiġte agur gonta paoi n-a builliḋ ro. Agur leis fin ionnor nac m-beiḋeaḋ na foillriġṫe ro gan fáṫ no gan toṁáḋ do ċuġadar geall taob a g-coiṁ-líonta. Ta iomlán an meud ro paoi puinn aiġ an Papa ionṁolta a bí noṁainn ann, Alifrinn VII annsi na bunaċarnaiḃ ro:

"Aiġ bneaṫnuġaḋ go g-coinġbuiġeann an Gaġlaiġ Roṁánaċ 'nna féile ṁóin, coṫnom an lae ann a geinneaḋ gan toibeim Áṁaille a bí a mam 'nna h-óiġ, agur gun ċionnġann ri b-pad ó fin oifige ann leiṫ agur go nonnaċ ceapuiġṫe amaċ do'n féile ro, de néill rġníobann uġdararaiġ cóinn, cnaiḃéiġe, ion-ṁolta noċ do ċuġ Sixtus IV a bí noiṁe ro 'nna Papa,—ir maiṫ linn-ne, man an g-ceadna, do néill fomnla na n-Carpoġ Romanaċ a bí noṁainn, an diaḃóid cnaḃṫaċ agur an gnáṫ ionṁolta ro a ċuinn ann aġaiḋ, man aon leis an raonta no feille, agur an t-reanc-onóinn a einiġear man geall ann,—onóin nán aṫnuiġaḋ a mam ann Gaġlaiġ na Roiṁe ó 'n am toirmiġeaḋ a d-tug ann. Ir toil linn-ne, man

"hibito, in Ecclesia Romana
"post ipsius cultus instituti-
"onem numquam immutato,
"Romanorum Pontificium
"Prædecessorum Nostrorum
"exemplo, favere nec non
"tueri pietatem, et devotio-
"nem hanc colendi, et cele-
"brandi beatissimam Virgi-
"nem, præveniente scilicet
"Spiritus Sancti gratia, a
"peccato originali præserva-
"tam, cupientesque in Chris-
"ti grege unitatem spiritus in
"vinculo pacis, sedatis offen-
"sionibus et jurgiis, amotis-
"que scandalis conservare:
"ad præfatorum Episcopo-
"rum cum Ecclesiarum su-
"arum Capitulis, ac Philippi
"Regis, ejusque Regnorum
"oblatam Nobis instantiam,
"ac preces; Constitutiones,
"et Decreta, a Romanis Pon-
"tificibus Prædecessoribus
"Nostris, et præcipue a Sixto
"IV, Paulo V et Gregorio
"XV edita in favorem sen-
"tentiæ asserentis, Animam
"beatæ Mariæ Virginis in sui
"creatione, et in corpus in-
"fusione, Spiritus Sancti gra-
"tia donatam, et a peccato

an g-céadna, cuimdaċ agus cum-
aingcé a bronaḋ ain an gnáṫ
diabóideaċ ro le a d-tuigṫean
onóir do'n naoṁ Aṁaigdin ain
nor aḋnaċa publiġe, man ġeall
gun cuimduiġaḋ í raon ó ṗeacaḋ
na ginṫe tré gnáṫa noiṁ-aineaċ
fabarfaċ an Spioraid naoiṁ.
Agus ir miad linn conġbáil
ruar a d-treud Criort aon-rpi-
onad aiṁdin faoi ċuing na fiċ-
ċaine,—aig cur fíor marlaḋ
agus clampain agus aig dibirt
reanail. Aṁail rin de, aig ta-
bairt cluain fabarfaiġ do buan-
ġuide agus impide na n-earpog
aimnniġṫe ruar, agus na g-cai-
bidil a bainear le na n-eaglai-
riḋ; agus aig ġéilaḋ go impide
an riġ Pilip agus na riġaċt a
tá faoi,—Foillriġmuid go nuaḋ
ma neacta agus na acta riġ-
amla noċ d' foillriġdar roime
ro and-Earpoig na Roime a
ċuaiḋ romainn, agus go h-airide
Sicrtuir IV, Pól V, agus Gne-
góir XV a d-taoḃ na bafaiṁla
le a dearḃṫar, gur naiḃ anam
na naoṁ-Aṁaigdine Aṁaine an
tnáṫ cruċuiġaḋ é, agus an mo-
méid a taċuiġaḋ é le n-a corp,
lán de gnáṫa ó tabairtar an
Spioraid Naoiṁ agus cuimduiġṫe
ó peacaḋ na rinrine: agus a
d-taoḃ an raona tá ain co-ċnoṁ
... iae ain a geimiḋ an Aṁaig-
dean Aṁaċain De, agus na
folaimuine tá ain, ann a h-
onóir, man dubrad ceanna, a m-
earg na b-fíreun, man ġeall
airi na bafaiṁla rin—Orduiġ-
muid go g-coimeudfaiḋ gaċ ne-
aċ na neaċta rin ain eagla
daon-ċaine no millain eaglairiġe,

"originali præservatam fuisse;
"nec non et in favorem festi,
"et cultus Conceptionis ejusdem Virginis Deiparæ secun-
"dum piam istam sententiam, ut præfertur, exhibiti, innova-
"mus, et sub censuris et pœnis in eisdem Constitutionibus
"contentis, observari mandamus.

agus faoi 'n b-fiadhnuise na g-cloinne tá anocha ceapuighte amach.

ET insuper om-
"nes et singulos,
"qui præfatas
"Constitutiones,
"seu Decreta ita
"pergent interpretari,
"ut favorem per illas
"dictæ sententiæ, et festo seu
"cultui secundum illam exhi-
"bito, frustrentur, vel qui
"hanc eamdem sententiam,
"festum seu cultum in dis-
"putationem revocare, aut
"contra ea quoquo modo di-
"recte, vel indirecte aut quo-
"vis prætextu, etiam defini-
"bilitatis ejus examinandæ,
"sive sacram Scripturam,
"aut sanctos Patres, sive
"Doctores glossandi vel in-
"terpretandi, denique alio
"quovis prætextu seu occa-
"sione, scripto seu voce lo-
"qui, concionari, tractare
"disputare, contra ea quid-
"quam determinando, aut
"asserendo, vel argumenta

Feadh a'r bann, ir mian linn go m-beidheadh faoi an g-cáin agus an fiadhnuise ceadna, gach neach agus gach dream a leanfar do 'n obair mhuighadh a cur ann na neacta, mi-fhabhanach do ghall ghnáthach na g-crioptaidh, no do 'n b-feile; no do 'n ard-oinoir a éirighar ó ghoidheb lucht an ghnéimh;—agus go m-beidhadh aithlaidh an dream mhan an g-ceadna a dhéanfar gan leigeadh no náire, an deagh-bhanamhail ro, no an feilé, no an ard-óinoir a tabhairt ann cuntair agus ann ceirt', no a labhairt fíorma ann bidh mhór, ann aghaidh na neithe ro air or íriroll no air or and, go dírneach no go cam faoi fgath ann bidh,—ma 'r ann ron ceirtnuighthe, an b-fuil no nach b-fuil re ceanntar an teagarg ro a fhocnuighadh;—no ann fgath an fgriobhain dhadha, no fgriobhain na n-aithreach naomhtha, no na n-ollamh eolgach a ghlinnuighadh, no a mhínighadh; no, fa fgath no ocaid ann bidh mhór; agus leis fin a dhéanfar a luadh ann guth no ann ghnáthadh, no a déanfar reasanamhail no comhradh, no thráchtail, no dearbhóireacht air dearbhadh no air deimhnighadh nid ann bidh, no air cur amach ádhbhar agus mharbhadh 'nn a n-aghaidh,—no a fághail gan fíor-fhreagradh iad ro a

"contra ea afferendo, et in-
"soluta relinquendo, aut alio
"quovis inexcogitabili modo
"disserendo ausi fuerint;
"præter pœnas et censuras
"in Constitutionibus Sixti
"IV contentas, quibus illos
"subjacere volumus, et per
"præsentes subjicimus, etiam
"concionandi, publice legen-
"di, seu docendi, et interpre-
"tandi facultate, ac voce ac-
"tiva, et passiva in quibus-
"cumque electionibus, eo ip-
"so absque alia declaratione
"privatos esse volumus; nec
"non ad concionandum, pub-
"lice legendum, docendum,
"et interpretandum perpetuæ
"inhabilitatis pœnas ipso fac-
"to incurrere absque alia de-
"claratione; a quibus pœnis
"nonnisi a Nobis ipsis, vel a
"Successoribus Nostris Ro-
"manis Pontificibus absolvi,
"aut super iis dispensari pos-
"sint: nec non eosdem aliis
"pœnis, Nostro, et eorumdem
"Romanorum Pontificum
"Successorum Nostrorum ar-
"bitrio infligendis, pariter
"subjacere volumus, prout
"subjicimus per præsentes,

tuzaḋ aṁlaiḋ, no aiz déanaḋ
féidm de fliże ain biť eile ćum
conrróide naċ léan "Duinn-ne"
an t-am atá a láťain. Fearr
a'r báir na b-fianar azur na
mílleán cáinaṁla tá ceapuiżże
amaċ a neaċtaiḃ Sicrtúir IV,
azur d'ain mian linn-ne an muin-
tir ro a fuaťaḋ azur leir na
leicinnḋ ro tá faoi .n-ain lam
daonaṁuiḋ iaḋ,—'fé an d-toil
zo z-cailfaiḋ fíaḋ ain an ball, azur
zan foillriuzaḋ faoi ó neaċ ain
biť, cuṁaċt feanaṁóin no coṁ-
naḋ a déanaḋ; leizean publiże,
teazarz no eidir-míniuzaḋ a
ťabairt, azur zan oiread le zuť
a beit aca, no cuideaḋ ain biť
ain zaċ aon ocáid d'a zníḋtar
noża le duine a ćuin ann uaċ-
tarainar. Azur 'nna ċeann fin
ir mian linn-ne zo m-beideaḋ
an dream a déanfaḋ mar dub-
naṁar, ain ocáid a déanta,
azur zan aon duine labairt le-
oťa faoi, buailte faoi ćuinz
cáine azur fianuir fíor-fort
'nn déiż fin zo deo, zan ceaḋ
no cuṁaċt feanaṁóin a déanaḋ,
oideas na teazarz no eidir-
míniuzaḋ a ťabairt uaťa. Azur
ar ćuinz na cáine fin ní feidir
leo maiteanar no neiḋteaċ fáż-
ail ó aon neaċ aċt uainn féin
amain, no ó árd-Carroiz na
Roinne a tiocfar ann an n-déiż.
Azur tuille eile, fé an d-toil
zo m-beideaḋ an dream céaḋna
faoi fianuir ain biť, a z-ceann
an méid ro, a táṁaid féin d'ar
nożan, no táid árd-Carroiz na
Roinne a einnoċar 'nn ar n-déiż,
néid le cuin oiťa; azur mar
fin de, leazamuid-ne orra iaḋ,

"innovantes Pauli V et Gre-
"gorii XV superius memo-
"ratas Constitutions sive
"Decreta.

C libros, in qui-
"bus præfata sen-
"tentia, festum,
"seu cultus se-
"cundum illam in
"dubium revocatur,
"aut contra ea quomo-
"documque, ut supra, aliquid
"scribitur aut legitur, seu
"locutiones, conciones, trac-
"tatus, et disputationes con-
"tra eadem continentur, post
"Pauli V supra laudatum De-
"cretum edita, aut in poste-
"rum quomodolibet edenda,
"prohibemus sub pœnis et
"censuris in Indice librorum
"prohibitorum contentis, et
"ipso facto absque alia de-
"claratione pro expresse pro-
"hibitis haberi volumus et
"mandamus."

MNES autem no-
runt quanto stu-
dio hæc de Im-
maculata Dei-
paræ Virginis Con-
ceptione doctrina a
spectatissimis Religio-

le bruig na leitmeac so, aig
foillriughadh anis go nuadh meac-
ta agus dlighe-accha Póil V, agus
Gregóir XV ann a tnáctadh ceanna.

"Agus a d-taob na leabhara
a thainnigear ann amhrair bam-
abhail cnabtach so ann a tnác-
tadh suas, no an feile a cuimeadh
ann bun, no an and-oghóir a
fiolmuighear ó 'n g-céil cnisorta-
mail so; no ma fághan ionnta
focal a rgnibhadh no a leighead,
mar dubhadh suas, no bhiathara,
no reanamóinidh, no papéir tnác-
tair no dearbóineacta—ma cui-
meadh a g-clódh iad tar éis dlighe-
acht ionmholta Póil V, no ma
rgeitréan iad am ann bidh le
teacht,—toimmearghamuid iadh
agus leaghamuidh cáin onna agus
milleadh ata dírighte ann an Inde-
cer, no gleur tarbanta, 'nn
aghaidh na leabhara toimmearghta;
agus re an d-toil agus an n-
ordughadh go m-beidheadh riadh, ma
táid man dubhadh agus man geall
ann rin, gan duine ann bidh a
dheanadh thácht raoi,—comhairleamh-
ta amhairg na leabhara a tá sion-
toimmearghta."

Tá fíor aig an domhan mór
go maith cad é an dioghbhar le'n
rgeitheadh, le'n deimhighadh agus
cornuighadh an teagarg so a d-taob
glé-gheinamhuighe na Mhaighdine
Mhuire mathar Dé, a laimh na
muintire riaghalta ir ainde néim,
agus na n-Aidhadaimh diadhanachtaigh
ir mo cháil a'r cliu; agus na n-

sis Familiis, et celebrioribus Theologicis Academiis ac præstantissimis rerum divinarum scientia Doctoribus fuerit tradita, asserta ac propugnata. Omnes pariter norunt quantopere solliciti fuerint Sacrorum Antistites vel in ipsis ecclesiasticis conventibus palam publiceque profiteri, sanctissimam Dei Genitricem Virginem Mariam ob prævisa Christi Domini Redemptoris merita nunquam originali subjacuisse peccato, sed præservatam omnino fuisse ab originis labe, et idcirco sublimiori modo redemptam. Quibus illud profecto gravissimum, et omnino maximum accedit, ipsam quoque Tridentinam Synodum, cum dogmaticum de peccato originali ederet decretum, quo juxta sacrarum Scripturarum, sanctorumque Patrum, ac probatissimorum Conciliorum testimonia statuit, ac definivit, omnes homines nasci originali culpa infectos, tamen solemniter declarasse, non esse suæ intentionis in decreto istud et ullatenus comprehendere beatam Virginem Mariam Dei Genitricem, sed observatas esse constitutiones Felicis Papæ IV. Praedecessoris Nostri, quibus praecipitur, ne quis audeat Mariam Virginem Dei Genitricem originali culpa notare, quas Nos renovamus.

Quare Nos, qui nihil magis optamus, quam ut ea, quæ Praedecessores Nostri statuerunt, ab omnibus inviolate observentur, et quæ ipsi decreverunt, ea omnia ab omnibus fideliter amplectenda et servanda esse, ut Nostrum est, decernimus, declaramus, sententiamque illam, qua Beatissimam Virginem Mariam originali culpa labem contraxisse asserunt, tamquam Catholicæ doctrinæ adversam, reprobamus, damnamus, atque ab omnibus Christi fidelibus prorsus exulare debere declaramus.

Quod si quis ea, quæ Nos decernimus, declaramus, damnamus, atque reprobamus, quod absit, sentire præsumpserit, noverit, se ac suum judicium sponte damnatum fore, et naufragium circa fidem passum esse, atque ab unitate Ecclesiæ, hoc est a corpore Christi, quod est Ecclesia, se ipsum separasse, insuper noverit, eum incursurum esse omnes censuras, quas contra hæreticos eorumque fautores Sacri Canones, Apostolicæ, Oecumenicæ, Generalium Concilia, ac Romani Pontifices Praedecessores Nostri sanctissimi, sive in Oecumenicis Conciliis, sive extra ea, sanxerunt, et quas Nos in Constitutione, quæ incipit *Apostolici muneris*, renovavimus.

Ut autem ad Nos, qui, licet immeriti, in terris Jesu Christi vicem gerimus, omnes fideles, quibus Ecclesiæ regimen divinitus commissum est, ad unitatem fidei, ad sanctitatem vitæ, ad perfectionem, ad veram Christi Ecclesiam, quæ est unitas catholica, et ejusdem Romani Pontificis, qui est beati Petri Principis Apostolorum successor, obedientiam, ad quem, ut Patrum gesta testantur, et sacrorum Canonum sanctiones, et Oecumenicorum Conciliorum decreta, præsertim vero hujus Tridentini Synodi, Spiritus Sanctus omnia Ecclesiæ negotia, omnesque ejus Pastores dirigere, regere, et pascere promisit, ad eum, inquam

creto ipso, tantaque definitionis amplitudine comprehendere beatam, et immaculatam Virginem Dei Genitricem Mariam. Hac enim declaratione Tridentini Patres, ipsam beatissimam Virginem ab originali labe solutam pro rerum temporumque adjunctis satis innuerunt, atque adeo perspicue significarunt, nihil ex divinis Litteris, nihil ex traditione, Patrumque auctoritate rite afferri posse, quòd tantæ Virginis prærogativæ quovis modo refragetur.

ʒlan ó caıɲ peacaıð na rıɲrıɲé ; agur do tarbanadar ʒo ʒlıɲɲ agur ʒo roıllerıɲ nan naıb nıð aıɲ bıṫ ó'n rʒnıoḃan ḋıada no ó buantarɲaɲʒt na n-am ċuaıð ṫarɲt,—no ó uʒḋanar na n-aıṫɲeaċ naoṁṫa aɲ b'ṗeıdɪɲ a taḃaɲt a laċaɲ, a cuɲɲaıð ʒo coṫnom an aʒaıð eaʒraṁlaċta maɲrıʒc na Mhaıʒḋıne Mhuıɲe.

IT re quidem vera hanc de Immaculata beatissimæ Virginis Conceptione doctrinam quotidie magis gravissimo Ecclesiæ sensu, magisterio, studio, scientia, ac sapientia tam splendide explicatam, declaratam, confirmatam, et apud omnes catholici orbis populos, ac nationes mirandum in modum propagatam, in ipsa Ecclesia semper extitisse veluti a majoribus acceptam, ac revelatæ doctrinæ charactere insignitam illustri venerandæ antiquitatis Ecclesiæ orientalis et occidentalis monumenta validissime testantur. Christi

Dan ʒo deıṁın agur ʒo deanḃṫa tá an cneıdeaṁ ro taoḃ na Naoṁ Mhaıʒḋıne Mhuıɲe "ʒur ʒabaḋ í ʒan peacaḋ" ann, ó ċuıɲeaḋ an eaʒlaıɲ aıɲ bun : Agur ʒaċ lá 'n ḋéıʒ a ċéıle tá rí ó 'n méıḋ móɲ céıle agur tuıʒre tá aıcı man aon le uaċdaɲanar, buan-oıdear, eolur, agur eaʒna 'ʒ a ṁínıúʒaḋ ʒo roıllíɲ, 'ʒ a ṗoıllrıúʒaḋ, 'ʒ a deıṁnıuʒaḋ agur 'ʒ a rʒannaḋ, aıɲ mod ıonʒantaċ ameart ʒaċ pobuıl Catoılıʒeaċ agur ʒaċ cınne ċnío an doman móɲ. An cneıdeaṁ ro tá rí a conʒbaıl a ṫeılḃ man rtóɲ a ṫuan rí ó 'na Príomċınıortaıḃ agur ó na h-aıṫeaċaıḃ naoṁṫa, agur a d-tuʒaḋ dí ṗaoı reula lonnaċ an teaʒarʒa do ċnaobrʒaoıl Árd-Rıʒ neıṁe féın. Tá aıcı leır an ṗínıne ro a deanḃaḋ an ṗíadnuıre ır ʒlınne agur ır daınʒıne aıɲ bıṫ, ré rın, leaċta buana na Caʒlaıre roɲ agur na h-Caʒlaıre ṫıan le lınn aımrıne anra na Príomh-Cínıortaıḃ. Oɲ ır rí Caʒlaır Cínıort teac dídın agur coranṫóɲ cnóḋa na ríon-

enim Ecclesia sedula depositorum apud se dogmatum custos, et vindex, nihil in his unquam permutat, nihil minuit, nihil addit, sed omni industria vetera fideliter, sapienterque tractando si qua antiquitus informata sunt, et Patrum fides sevit, ita limare, expolire studet, et prisca illa cœlestis doctrinæ dogmata accipiant evidentiam, lucem, distinctionem, sed retineant plenitudinem, integritatem, proprietatem, ac in suo tantum genere crescant, in eodem scilicet dogmate, eodem sensu, eademque sententia.

EQUIDEM Patres, Ecclesiæque Scriptores cœlestibus edocti eloquiis nihil antiquius habuere, quam in libris ad explicandas Scripturas, vindicanda dogmata, erudiendosque fideles elucubratis summam Virginis sanctitatem, dignitatem, atque ab omni peccati labe

baṁala a d-tuzad dí. Man fin de, ni aṫmuiġeann fí zo deo focail annta; ni laġduiġann fad; ni cuimeann fí aon leiṫid leo. Acht le faoċain mór man aon lé dioġnás agus le cuibeas cuimeann fí a g-ceann a ceile an méid a ċaimic anúas ċuicí ó aimsir ársa, a'r gaċ uile ní tá aice ó láṁ na n-aiṫeasc: Agus cóg fí ailṫí ḟein bail agus fuiṁ, có fada a'r tá tarcail, a ċur oiṫe air moḋ zo b-fuiġeaḋ baṁala arra an cneidiṁ neaṁda níor mó loṁa, foillse agus zlanse, acht 'ran am céadna, zo g-coṁzoċaḋ fiad a n-iomlánacht, a n-ionnacas agus a fonnacas no gné, agus annsan am céadna, zo fzeiċfaidís amaċ faoi blát agus bíreaċ, acht gan a náduir a aṫnuġaḋ, agus zo m-béidís zo buan, lán de'n ḟíriṁe céadna, de'n ċial céadna agus de'n míṁuġaḋ céadna.

Zo deimin ni naib nuḋ air bíḋ 'nna ċuṁaṁ có 'mór air cnoidiḃ na n-aiṫeasc naoṁta agus air luċt fzníbine ná h-Eaglaise a bí eolzaċ ann urlabraḋ neaṁda, 'na a beiċ le fonn aiz comórtar le céile annsan na leabaraib zlan-fzniobta a ċuṁadar ċum an fzníptuir a míniúzaḋ, bun-baṁala an cneidiṁ a coraint, agus na ḟíreun a múineaḋ—aiz foillsiúzaḋ air gaċ moḋ ionzantaċ agus air gaċ ocáid agus 'z a fzannaḋ zo fóin-leaṫan éirí an doṁan móṁ, naoṁaċt agus ardċéime na Naizdine Muire, a

integritatem, ejusque præclaram de teterrimo humani generis hoste victoriam multis mirisque modis certatim prædicare atque efferre. Quapropter enarrantes verba, quibus Deus præparata renovandis mortalibus suæ pietatis remedia inter ipsa mundi primordia prænuntians et deceptoris serpentis retulit audaciam, et nostri generis spem mirifice erexit inquiens: "Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem, semen tuum et semen illius," docuere divino hoc oraculo clare aperteque prædemonstratum fuisse misericordem humani generis Redemptorem, scilicet Unigenitum Dei Filium Christum Jesum, ac designatam beatissimam Ejus Matrem Virginem Mariam, ac simul ipsissimas utriusque contra diabolum inimicitias insigniter expressas. Quocirca sicut Christus Dei hominumque mediator humana assumpta natura delens quod adversus nos erat chirographum decreti, illud cruci triumphator affixit, sic sanctissima Virgo

ionnacar iomlan ó fal an peacaid agus a buan buaid beannuighe or cionn Aibbeirseona an chinne daonna. Ir uime ro do ninnadar amlaid 'nuair do mhinghdar na bratacha le'n labairt Dia linn a lár prisomh-buaid an domain, air an leighear a fuair a deagh-mhéin duinn amach leis an cinne daonna a ac-glanadh agus a n-déanadh nuadh, agus le'n cuir fe air cul fotail dána an natúr nimhe cealgaigh, agus le'n d' ardaigh fé go h-iongantach doichiur an gcinne, aig rádh: "Do chuirfaid mé namhadar eidir tu-fa agus an mnaoi, eidir do fhol-se agus a fhol-san." Do mhuinadar gur tarbanadh go glinn, foilleir, 'san óráid diadha ro, fuarghaltóir thocaireach an cinne daonna,—se sin, an Slanuighteoir Iosa Criosd aon-mhac Dé, agus gur cuireadh aithne shéirsealta agus gné air an Mhaighdin Mhuire a Mhatair beannuighte, agus gur foillrighead annsa na foclaid céadna, namhadar an beirt na Matair agus an Mhic ann aghaidh an diabhail. Mhair sin de, néill mar nigh Criosd, Mheadantóir eidir Dia agus an duine, faoi an nadur daonna do tóg se air féin, lamhrighobair an acta a bi fíor ann an n-aghaidh, agus 'nn a buaidhfear d'fartuigh é do'n gcroich, mar an gcéadna, ann aonfeacht leis-san agus trie n-a cumhacht do cuir an naomh óig a tá go dluth agus faoi aon cuing gan rgarradh, táthuighe leis, rionnamhadar air an b-péirt neimheach, agus aig fághail buaidh go

arctissimo, et indissolubili vinculo cum eo conjuncta una cum Illo, et per Illum sempiternas contra venenosum serpentem inimicitias exercens, ac de ipso plenissime triumphans illius caput immaculato pede contrivit.

ballaċ aiṁ, do ḃṙiṙ ṙí a ċeann ʒṁáṅa le n-a coiṙ ionṁaiɔ ʒleʒeal.

HUNC eximium, singularemque Virginis triumphum, excellentissimamque innocentiam, puritatem, sanctitatem, ejusque ab omni peccati labe integritatem, atque ineffabilem cœlestium omnium gratiarum, virtutum, ac privilegiorum copiam, et magnitudinem iidem Patres viderunt tum in arca illa Noe, quæ divinitus constituta a communi totius mundi naufragio plane salva et incolumis evasit: tum in scala illa, quam de terra ad cœlum usque pertingere vidit Jacob, cujus gradibus Angeli Dei ascendebant, et descendebant, cujusque vertici ipse innitebatur Dominus; tum in rubo illo, quem in loco sancto Moyses undique ardere, ac inter crepitantes ignis flammas non jam comburi aut

Aṅ ḃuaiḋ ionʒaṅtaċ ro ʒaṅ raṁail a ṙuaiṁ aṅ Ṁaiʒḋeaṅ, a ṅeaṁ-ċiontaċt ṫaṁ cáċ eile, a ṙíoṁ ʒlaṅṅaċt, a ṅaoṁṫaċt aʒuṙ a ionṁaċaṙ iomláṅ ó ʒaċ ṙmal ṗeacaiḋ, maṙ aon le lantuile na n-uile ʒnáṫa le'n líonaḋ í, aʒuṙ iondualaċt na ʒcáilḋeaċt aʒuṙ na n-deaʒ-tabaṙtaṙ ó ṅeaṁ a ṫaiṁc anuaṙ oṁṫi, do ċonaiṁcadaṁ na haiṫṁeaċa naoṁṫa ṗaoi aṅ iomḋa coṙaṁlaċt. Do ċonaiṁċadaṁ í aṅn aiṁc Noaʒa a cumaḋ ṁéiṁ oṁduʒaḋ Dé ṗéiṁ, aʒuṙ a ṫaiṁc ṙlán ṙabalta ó 'léiṁ-ṙʒniṙ aʒuṙ ó 'n m-baċaḋ a ṫáṁla le linn na díleann aiṁ aṅ doṁan ṁóṁ. Do ċonaiṁcadaṁ í 'ran dṫéimne ud a ċuiṁeaḋ oṙ coṁaiṁ ruilíḋ Jacoiḃ aʒuṙ a ṙneiċ ó ṫalaṁ ruaṙ ʒo ṅeaṁ; aʒuṙ aiṁ a ṅabadaṁ aiṁʒliḋ Dé aiʒ dul ruaṙ aiṁ a ṁonʒaiḃ aʒuṙ aiʒ teaċt anuaṙ, aʒuṙ aiṁ a ṁullaċ ʒuṁ naiḃ aṅ Tiʒeaṙna é ṗeiṁ aiʒ claonaḋ. Do ċonaiṁcadaṁ í 'ran ṙʒeaċ a bí ʒo léiṁ aiʒ loṙʒaḋ oṙ coṁaiṁ Ṁaoiṙe, aiṁ íċiṁ ṅaoṁṫa, aʒuṙ é a láṁ na dían-laṙnaċ aiʒ pleuṙʒaḋ le teaṅ teaṙa, aʒuṙ ní deiʒ ríu, níoṁ doiʒċeaḋ é aʒuṙ níoṁ eiṁiʒ ceo de Uṁċóiḋ do'n tuiṁ, aċt do ċonaiṁc ṙé é aiʒ cuṁ amaċ duilleaḃaṁ ʒlaṙa aʒuṙ

jacturam vel minimam pati, sed pulchre virescere ac florescere conspexit; tum in illa inexpugnabili turri a facie inimici, ex qua mille clypei pendent, omnisque armatura fortium; tum in horto illo concluso, qui nescit violari, neque corrumpi ullis insidiarum fraudibus; tum in corusca illa Dei civitate, cujus fundamenta in montibus sanctis; tum augustissimo illo Dei templo, quod divinis refulgens splendoribus plenum est gloria Domini; tum in aliis ejusdem generis omnino plurimis, quibus excelsam Deiparæ dignitatem, ejusque illibatam innocentiam, et nulli unquam nævo obnoxiam sanctitatem, insigniter prænunciatam fuisse Patres tradiderunt.

AD hanc eamdem divinorum munerum veluti summam, originalemque Virginis, de qua natus est Jesus, integritatem descri-

blaċa bána bneaża, zo úr, rzlamac, áluin. Buð coraṁail leiṫ an túr dían, daingean, nár b' feidir leir an naṁaid a bí or a coinne a ċeaṫaḋ, nó a ċlaoiḋ, man do bí ó'n a bárr míle rzlaċ man aon le zleur airm na nzoill azur iad a tá tneiraṁail 'ra z-compac. Buð coraṁail leiṫ an zarrda faoi ċumdaċ air nár b' feidir leir an naṁaḋ le cleaṫaiżaċt azur cluan-beart fażail a rceaċ, no an fál a briread. Buð coraṁail í lé caṫair dealraċ Dé a cuiread a bunna 'nna ruiḋaḋ air barraiḃ na m-binn m-beannuiżże. Buð coraṁail leiṫe an teampul riżaṁail, riż-ṁeudaċ le dealraḋ ḋiaḋa, azur líonta lé zlóir an Tiżearna. Do cuiread a z-coraṁail í roim ṫeaċt cor a bíṫ ḋí air an t-raożal, le míle ruḋ eile de'n t-raṁail ro, noċ a tá, deir na h-aiṫneaċa naoṁṫa, man tarbanaḋ ḋuinn-ne, ann ar leunzar zeárir, air ár-ċéime, air uairḟeaċt azur néim riżaṁail, a rír-zille azur zlé-zeallaċt zlóruṁan man aon le n-a naoṁṫaċt zan teorann; oiż naċ raiḃ a riaṁ raoi rzaṫ cóire, no cáine, no tnú toiḃeime.

Le ruim iomlán, man deaṁra, an ṁeiḋ ro tíoḋlacaḋ, azur le roiṁreaċt rír-buan na Maiżḋine ó zeinead í, do ḟoillriúżaḋ or coṁair an doṁain móir, do rinnadar na h-aiṫneaċa naoṁṫa aiż molaḋ na Maiżḋine mairiże móruṁaire, úraiḋ de na briaṫanaiḃ céadna a zlaoiḋadar na raiżiḋ oiṫí, 'nuair bíodar 'z a

bendam iidem Prophetarum adhibentes eloquia non aliter ipsam augustam Virginem concelebrarunt, ac uti columbam mundam, et sanctam Jerusalem, et excelsum Dei thronum, et arcam sanctificationis et domum, quam sibi æterna ædificavit Sapientia, et Reginam illam, quæ deliciis affluens, et innixa super Dilectum suum, ex ore Altissimi prodivit omnino perfecta, speciosa ac penitus cara Deo, et nullo unquam labis nævo maculata. Cum vero ipsi Patres, Ecclesiæque Scriptores animo menteque reputarent, beatissimam Virginem ab Angelo Gabriele sublimissimam Dei Matris dignitatem ei nuntiante, ipsius Dei nomine et jussu gratia plenam fuisse nuncupatam, docuerunt hac singulari solemnique salutatione nunquam alias audita ostendi, Deiparam fuisse omnium divinarum gratiarum sedem omnibusque divini Spiritus charismatibus exornatam, imo eorumdem charismatum infinitum prope thesaurum; abyssumque inh-alcuġaḋ, aġur aiġ cáiṁċuġaḋ a caiċ-péime. Ṁaṙ ḟin ḋe, ġlaoiḋaṙ colum cáiḋ, glé, oṅċi; aġur Jeṙuṙalem ṅaoṁṫa; ánḋ-caṫaoiṙ Dé; aiṙc aġur ár ṙaṙ láṁ-ṅaoṁṫa, noċ ó tuṙ ḋo ċeaṙ amaċ aġur ḋo ṙiṅṅe an Tiġeaṙṅa ṙíoṙṁuiḋe Dó-ṗéiṅ; an ṙiġbean uḋ líonta le táiṅte aġur oll-ṁaṫaiṙ aġur aiġ claoṅaḋ aiṙ a gnaḋ geall, ṫaiṅic ṗuiṅte ṗoiṙṗé amaċ ó beul ánḋ-ṙiġ móṙ an ḋoṁaiṅ; ṙ ī tá glíṅ, glé-ġeal, gnáḋṁaṙ aġur ó ċnoiḋe a ṙtiġ ṗaoi ṙeaṙc aiġ Dia ṗeiṅ, óiġ ṫaṙ oiġ-bean ṅa cruiṅṅe náṙ tṁuaiṙleaḋ aṙiaṁ leiṙ an ṙmal ṗeacaiḋ buḋ luġe. Act a g-cloṅṅ an mæuḋ ṙo a ḋubṗaḋ a-ṅóiṙ ta tuiṙleaḋ eile, óiṙ ṅuaiṙ ḋo bṙeaṫṅuiġḋaṙ ṅa h-aiṫṙeaċa ṅaoṁṫa aġur luċt ṙgṙíobṅe ṅa h-eaglaiṙe anṅ a ṅ-iṅṅtiṅṅ aġur anṅ a ṅ-aiġṅe aiṙ bṙiaṫaṙaiḃ a ḋubaiṙt an t-ánḋ-Aiṅġeal Gabṙiel leiṙ an óiġ, 'ṅuaiṙ cuiṙeaḋ aiṙ teaċtaiṙeaċt é ċuiṙi le ṅṙeaċt ói an ánḋ-oṅoiṙe a buḋ ṁó, aġur buḋ ṙoṅġaṅtaiġe a ṫuġaḋ ḋo ṁṅaoi aiṙ bíṫ a ṙiaṁ, ġuṙ b'ṙe a bí le beiṫ 'ṅṅa Maṫaiṙ aiġ Dia; aġur 'ṅuaiṙ ḋo bṙeaṫṅuiġḋaṙ ġuṙ anṅ aiṅm Dé aġur lé ṅ-a oṅḋuġaḋ, ḋubaiṙt Gabṙiel Leiṫi—"a Maṙie, a tá láṁ ḋe ġnáṙa," ḋo ṫuġaḋaṙ ṗa 'ṅ-aiṙe, aġur ḋo ṁúṅaḋaṙ ġuṙ, ó 'ṅ ṗailte ṗlaiṫaṁail ṗíoṙ-beaṅṅuiġṫe ṙo ġaṅ ṙaṁail, óiṙ níoṙ cluiṙeaḋ ó ṫuṙ aġur ní cluiṙṙaiḋ a ċoiḋċe a leiṫeaḋ,—ḋo ṫaṙbaṅaḋ ġuṙ b'í maṫaiṙ Dé tobaiṙ

exhaustam, adeo ut nunquam maledicto obnoxia, et una cum Filio perpetuæ benedictionis particeps ad Elisabeth divino acta Spiritu audire meruerit: *Benedicta Tu inter mulieres, et benedictus fructus ventris tui.*

HINC non luculenta minus, quam concors eorumdem sententia, gloriosissimam Virginem, cui fecit magna, qui potens est, ea cœlestium omnium donorum vi, ea gratiæ plenitudine, eaque innocentia emicuisse, qua veluti ineffabile Dei miraculum, immo omnium miraculorum apex, ac digna Dei Mater extiterit, et ad Deum ipsum pro ratione creatæ naturæ, quam proxime accedens omnibus, qua humanis, qua angelicis præconiis celsior evaserit. Atque idcirco originalem Dei Genitricis innocentiam exhaustam, adeo ut nunquam maledicto obnoxia, et una cum Filio perpetuæ benedictionis particeps ad Elisabeth divino acta Spiritu audire meruerit: *Benedicta Tu inter mulieres, et benedictus fructus ventris tui.*

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tiam, justitiamque vindicandam, non Eam modo cum Heva adhuc virgine, adhuc innocente, adhuc incorrupta, et nondum mortiferis fraudulentissimi serpentis insidiis decepta sæpissime contulerunt, verum etiam mira quadam verborum, sententiarumque varietate prætulerunt.—Heva enim serpenti misere obsequuta et ab originali excidit innocentia, et illius mancipium evasit, sed beatissima Virgo originale donum jugiter augens, quin serpenti aures unquam præbuerit, illius vim potestatemque virtute divinitus accepta funditus labefactavit.

QUAPROPTER nunquam cessarunt Deiparam appellare vel lilium inter spinas, vel terram omnino intactam, virgineam, illibatam, immaculatam, semper benedictam, et ab omni peccati contagione liberam, ex qua

no le aingiúb féin a bhonaḋ oirisi. Agus is ann an áḋbar ro, cum báṗṗ-ṡíle buime agus Athar Dé agus a ionnacar maireaċ ó 'n uaiṗ a geineaḋ í, a cuṗ or comaiṗ na b-ṗíneun, do cuiṗeadaṗ í go minic a g-comoṗtar le Eba, 'nuaiṗ bí ṗí 'nna h-óiġ agus gle, ionnac, raoṗ ó coiṁṗaċt agus coll, agus 'nuaiṗ naċ naiḃ ṗí go reaċnaṁaċ mealta aiġ cealg agus cluaine claoiḋaṁail na Péirte fealltiġe; acht 'nna ceann rin raoi baṗṗ iolbhiaċaṁa, agus baṁaṁail bheaġa, ċarbanaḋaṗ gur noġa leo roimpíre an Athair Naoimhe. Óiṗ go coṗṗ aiġ claonaḋ a cluaire le comṁaḋ cealgaċ an Aṫar-nime do ċuir Eba ó ṗríomh-aoibneas na cóiṁe agus do ṁinneaḋ cnaill dí; acht ní aṁlaiḋ rinne an naoṁ Athair, ré do meudaiġ rí a g-comṁuiġe agus ann gaċ am go buan an tabaṗtar a ṗuaiṗ rí a d-tur, agus ní fe amain nán claon rí a riaṁ a cluar do comṁaḋ cealgaċ an aṫar nime, acht leir an m-briġ eirceaċtaċ ṗuaiṗ rí ó neaṁ do buail rí ṡíor, agus do ṡín ann lán, a cumaṗ agus a cumaċt.

Níor ṁinnadaṗ, ann an áḋbar rin, fóraḋ aiġ glaoiḋeaċ ann buime Dé an lile ameaṛġ na n-dealġ; an ieṁ úṗ, oiġaṁail, gle, gan bhoċ, gan béim, ṡíor-beannuiġte, agus raoṗ ó gaċ uile ṫalcaḋ peacaiḋ, an ché úṗ ar a cumaḋ an t-Aḋam nuaḋ. Glaoiḋadaṗ oṗċí gárnḋa geanamnaiḋe, gniaṁaṁail, gleġeal, glórmaṗ, gloinnaċ, agus paṁṫar na b-pliaruiṁ m-buan agus an ṗríomh-ionnacaiṛ, noċ do ṫaoċaruiġ Dia

novus formatus est Adam, vel irreprehensibilem, lucidissimum, amœnissimumque innocentiæ, immortalitatis, ac deliciarum paradisum a Deo ipso consitum et ab omnibus venenosi serpentis insidiis defensum, vel lignum immarcescibile, quod peccati vermis nunquam corruperit, vel fontem semper illimem, et Spiritus Sancti virtute signatum, vel divinissimum templum, vel immortalitatis thesaurum, vel unam et solam non mortis sed vitæ filiam, non iræ sed gratiæ germen, quod semper virens ex corrupta infectaque radice singulari Dei providentia præter statas cummunesque leges efflоruerit. Sed quasi hæc, licet splendidissima, satis non forent, propriis definitisque sententiis edixerunt, nullam prorsus, cum de peccatis agitur, habendam esse quæstionem de sancta Virgine Maria, cui plus gratiæ collatum fuit ad vincendum omni ex parte peccatum; tum professi sunt, gloriosissimam Virginem fuisse parentum reparatricem, posterorum vivificaé ꝑeıɲ, aʒuꞃ ɲáꞃ b' ꝑeıdꞃ leıꞃ aɲ b-Pêıꞃt ɲeıṁɲıʒ aɲ ꝑal a bɲıꝑeaḋ ɲo a ṁıllеaḋ le ɲ-a cealʒaıḃ aʒuꞃ a cuɱaꞃ cluaɲbeaɲtaċ. Ɠlaoıḋaḃaꞃ oɲċı áḋɱuḋ ḋo-ċɲaoıꝛe ɲáꞃ tɲuċuıʒ cɲuṁ aɲ ꝑeacaıḋ a ɲıaṁ ḋul ḋ' a ʒoɲɲe; ɲo toḃaꞃ ꝛíꞃɲ-uıꝛʒe, ʒlıɲɲ ɱaꞃ aɲ ċɲıoꝛtaıl aʒuꞃ ꝑaoı ꝛeula aıʒ ɲeaɲt aɲ Ṡꝑıoɲaıḋ Naoɱṁ. Ḍo ʒlaoıḋaḃaꞃ oɲċı teaɱꝑul ɲıʒ-ḋıaḃa, aʒuꞃ teaċtóɲ aɲ beaċa ṁaɲċaɲaıʒ; ɲo ɲʒéaɲ aoɲaɲac tá aṁaıɲ aɲɲ, a beaɲꝛaꞃ ɲí aɲ baꞃ, acт aɲ beaċa ꝛíꞃɲ ʒo ꝛíol Ádaıṁ; ɲó ʒeɲɲaṁuıɲ a ꝛíolɲuıʒ ɲí ó bɲuċ aʒuꞃ ꝑeaɲʒ, acт ó ʒɲáꞃa aʒuꞃ ʒeaɲ,—ʒıɲeoʒ a bı a ʒ-coṁɲuıḋe ʒlaꞃ, ʒıḋ ʒuɲ eſɲıʒ ɾí ó ṗɲeuɱ ꝑaoɲ, ꝑoʒta, aʒuꞃ a ḋ' ꝑaꞃ ꝛuaꞃ ꝑaoı ċuɲaɱ ɾꝑêıɾıalta Dé, aʒuꞃ ʒaɲ ʒeıllеaḋ ḋo ḋlıʒʒıḃ ɲáḋúɲa a ɾʒeıꞇ aɱaċ blaċa bɲeaʒa. Ʒıḋ ʒo ḃ-ꝑuılḋ ɲa baɲaṁla aʒuꞃ ɲa bɲıaċaɲa ɾo ċo ɾoıllêɲ le ɾoluꞃ aɲ lae, ɲí ḋêıʒ ɾíɲ ɲí ɲaıḃ a ɾaıꞇ aɲɲ, ɲo ʒuɲ ıɲɲɾıʒḋaꞃ aɱaċ a bɲıaċaɲaıḃ beaċtaċa, bɲıʒṁaɲa, a ɱ-bɲeıꞇ-aṁɲaꞃ oɲċı, ɲaċ ɲaıḃ ceıɾt a'ɾ ɲáɲ ċóɲ cêıɾt a beıꞇ ċoɲ aɲ bıꞇ aɲ aɲ Ṁaıʒḋeaɲ Ṁuɲɲe 'ɲuaɲ tɲaċtaɲ aɲ ꝑeacaḋ, óɲ ḋo líoɲaḋ ꝛuaꞃ í ċo ɱoɲ le boɲɲaḋ ɲa ɲʒɲáꞃa ɲaċ ɲaıḃ áıꞇ aɲ bıꞇ aıʒ ꝑeacaḋ aɲɲ a h-aıɾ, aʒuꞃ ʒuɲ buaıleaḋ buaıḋ ʒo buaɲ aʒuꞃ ʒo ballaċ aɲɲ. Ḍ' aḋṁuıʒḋaꞃ 'ɲɲa ċeaɲɲ ɾíɲ, ʒuɲ buḋ í aɲ Ṁaıʒḋeaɲ ʒlóɲṁaɲ aɲ beaɲ úḃ a ċuɲɲ bɲeaċ aɲɲ áıꞇ ꞇubaıɾꞇe aɲ ʒ-ceuḋ ceaꞃ-ɾıɲɾɲe, aʒuꞃ a ꞇuʒ ḋ'a ɾlıoċt-ɾaɲ a bı aɲɲ láɲ, beaċa aɲɲ aıɾ aɲíɾ; ʒuɲ ceaꞃuıʒaḋ aɱaċ í ó ꞇúɾ ɲa ɾíoɲɲuıḋaċta;

tricem, a sæculo electam, ab Altissimo sibi præparatam, a Deo, quando ad serpentem ait: "Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem," prædictam, quæ procul dubio venenatum ejusdem serpentis caput contrivit; ac propterea affirmarunt, eamdem beatissimam Virginem fuisse per gratiam ab omni peccati labe integram, ac liberam ab omni contagione et corporis, et animæ, et intellectus, ac semper cum Deo conversatam, et sempiterno fœdere cum illo conjunctam, nunquam fuisse in tenebris, sed semper in luce, et idcirco idoneum plane extitisse Christo habitaculum non pro habitu corporis, sed pro gratia originali.

agus le lámh an Ard-Rígh féin gur ollmhúigheadh í, agus ar béul Dé gur tugadh dúthaigh tuath aithe a teacht 'nuaigh dubhairt sé leis an athair nimhe: "Cuirfidh mé naimhdeas eidir thu-sa agus an mnaoi;" agus go crochfadh deireadh do bhrígh ri-re ceann seirmneach na péirté céadna. Ar aithe an ádhbhar so do deimhnigheadh gur naibh an naomh óigh céadna tríd gnáth Dé iomlán go ballach ó gach pluc peacaigh, agus faoi glan ó gach uile urcóid taobh coirp agus anama agus aigné; agus gur naibh rí ríoghdhéilabhair le Dia agus tacuighthe leis a mbuan-choimhéad. Ní naibh sí a riamh ann doirkeadar acht a gcomhnuighe a ríoghrolur, agus d'a bhrígh sin, gur naibh sí 'nn h-a áthar flúichtach agus 'nn a h-áitchomhnuighe ionchuibhe do Chríost, ní, go crochfadh, mar gheall aithe maithe agus aithe a corp acht mar gheall aithe an geanamhlacht gnáthamhail ann a geibheadh í

ACCEDUNT nobilissima effata, quibus de Virginis Conceptione loquentes testati sunt, naturam gratiæ cessisse ac stetisse tremulam

Tá agallamh le cur a gcionn an méid so, bhfiathaibh bheatha beannachtacha le'r thugadar tearthar aig thácht aithe geinealaigh na Slaighdhe, gur ghéil nádúr do ghnáth, agus gur fear se aig chitheadh faoi ghrath or a comhaithe le eagla 'dul nios faide. Óir bí sé le eilighe nach mbeidheadh an Slaighdean Slachtaithe De nios

pergere non sustinentem; nam futurum erat, ut Dei Genitrix Virgo non antea ex Anna conciperetur, quam gratia fructum ederet; concipi siquidem primogenitum oportebat, ex qua concipiendus esset omnis creaturæ primogenitus. Testati sunt carnem Virginis ex Adam sumptam maculas Adæ non admisisse, ac propterea beatissimam Virginem tabernaculum esse ab ipso Deo creatum, Spiritu Sancto formatum, et purpureæ revera operæ quod novus ille Beseleel auro intextum variumque effinxit, eamdemque esse meritoque celebrari ut illam, quæ proprium Dei opus primum extiterit, ignitis maligni telis latuerit, et pulchra natura, ac labis prorsus omnis nescia, tanquam aurorá undequaque rutilans in mundum prodiverit in sua Conceptione Immaculata. Non enim decebat, ut illud vas electionis communibus lacesseretur injuriis, quoniam plurimum a ceteris diff-

tuirge 'ʒ a ʒeinead ó Anna na bí an ʒnáṫa le n-a ċoṁad a ċabairt, aʒur bud cóṁ, ʒo deiṁin, ʒo b-fuiʒead Sí-re a beiṫ 'nn a ceud-ʒein, a bí í féin le beiṫ 'nna tuiṁe aiʒ an Te a tá 'nna ċeud-ʒein noiṁ ʒaċ cneatúir a cruṫuiʒad a niaṁ. Do ṫuʒadar tearṫar aʒur fiadnuiṡe naċ naib an ċolan a cumad Dí man neaċ de fhoċt Adaiṁ, faoi tnuaillad Adaiṁ, aʒur air an adbar sin, ʒur naib an naoṁ-óiʒ 'nna boċ a cruṫuiʒ Dia féin, aʒur a beilb an Spiorad Naoṁ, ʒneurta man an obair buiṫeann fíon-reodaċ do ċumuiʒ an Beṫaleal nuad, fiʒte le ór, aʒur iol-daṫaċ: Dubṫadar ʒur nud cuibe ʒo m-beidead ai, Óiʒ céadna 'nna adbar and-ċéime aʒur altuʒad, man ir ri-ré a bí ó ṫus 'nna fhiaṁ-obair fháidneaċ aiʒ Dia; ire aṁain a d'euluiʒ faor ó ʒaeḋil teinteaċa an Namaid neiṁniʒ; ire a bí ó nádúr lan-ṁaireaċ, aneolaċ air ʒaċ olc no urċoid, aʒur an tnáṫ a ʒeinead í faor o peacad, aiʒ dealuuʒad ʒle, ʒlinn, air an doṁan doirca, dub man neult loinnaċ na maidne a rcaparr doircar na h-oidċe. Aʒur ʒo deiṁin nír cóir é, ʒo m-bruiṫfide no ʒo mílfide an foiʒ̇eac uaral, toʒ̇a ro, le urcóid air biṫ, man a tá a n-dán ʒo ʒleur coiṫċean, man ʒeall naċ naib ré coraṁail, cor air biṫ, le foiʒ̇ṫiʒib eile, óir a nádúr aṁain bí coraṁalaċt eatarra, aʒur ní a b-peacad. D' eile bud cóir air far

ferens, natura communicavit non culpa, immo prorsus decebat ut sicut Unigenitus in cœlis Patrem habuit, quem Seraphim ter Sanctum extollunt, ita Matrem haberet in terris, quæ nitore sanctitatis nunquam caruerit. Atque hæc quidem doctrina adeo majorum mentes, animosque occupavit, ut singularis et omnino mirus penes illos invaluerit loquendi usus, quo Deiparam sæpissime compellarunt immaculatam omnique ex parte immaculatam, innocentem et innocentissimam, illibatam et undequaque illibatam, sanctam et ab omni peccati sorde alienissimam, totam puram, totam inteḿeratam, ac ipsam prope puritatis et innocentiæ formam, pulchritudine pulchriorem, venustate venustiorem, sanctiorem sanctitate, solamque sanctam purissimamque anima et corpore, quæ supergressa est omnem integritatem et virginitatem, ac sola tota facta domicilium universarum gratiarum Sanctissimi Spiritus et quæ, solo Deo excepto, extitit cunctis superior, et ipsis

amaċ, mar do bí aiġ an Aon-Mhac, aċair air neam air a b-fuilid na Seraifim go ríor aiġ blaoċ Naoiḿċa fá ċrí, no naoiḿċa go riġ-ánd, go m-beidead aiġi air talaiḿ Mhaċair, mar an ġ-céadna, naċ m-beidead go deo gan dealnad díada faoi naoiḿaċt riġ-ánd. Agus do bí an fíor agus an foġlam ro·ċo doiḿin rin 'na ġ-coiḿnuidhe ann intin agus a rfioraid na fírinn-Ċríordaid agus na n-aiċneaċ naoiḿċa, gur bud ġnáċaċ leo coiḿnad euġraiḿlaċ agus iongantaċ air fad amaċ a deanad ġaċ am a ċnaċtadar air Mhaċair Dé; narra go an-miniċ glaoidadar orrí maċair cáid, agus cáid air ġaċ uile ċaoi, iomrać agus rán-iomrać, gan truaillead, agus air ġaċ ċuma gan truaillead, naoiḿċa, agus a b-fad eulaiġte ó ralacad an peacaid, gle-ġeal, agus glinn go h-iomlán, agus annsi féin 'na deilb agus 'nn a ġné féin cáideaċta agus iomracair, níor áilne 'na an áilneaċt féin, níor rġéimhe 'na an rġéim féin agus an mháire, níor naoiḿċa 'na an naoiḿaċt féin, agus gur b'íre aiḿain a bí lán de naoiḿaċt agus de ġilleaċt riġ-móir a d-taob anama agus coirp, gur ġur buail ri bárr air ġaċ iomracar agus air an maiġdeanar féin, agus gur b'íre aiḿain a bí 'nna teaċ rtóir go léir aiġ ġnára uile an Spioraid naoiḿ, agus gur b'í-re ó Dia amaċ, a d' éirigh "a nadúr níor áilne, níor rġiaiḿaiġe agus níor naoiḿċa" or cionn ġaċ neaċ criuċaiġte, or cionn na Cerubím agus na Seraifim féin agus iomlán fluaiġte aingli na b-flaiṫeas, ċo móir rin naċ b-fuil

Cherubim et Seraphim, et omni exercitu Angelorum *natura pulchrior, formosior et sanctior*, cui prædicandæ cœlestes et terrenæ linguæ minime sufficiunt. Quem usum ad sanctissimæ quoque Liturgiæ monumenta atque ecclesiastica officia sua veluti sponte fuisse traductum, et in illis passim recurrere, ampliterque dominari nemo ignorat, cum in illis Deipara invocetur et prædicetur veluti una incorrupta pulchritudinis columba, veluti rosa semper vigens, et undequaque purissima, et semper immaculata semperque beata, ac celebretur uti innocentia, quæ nunquam fuit læsa, et altera Heva, quæ Emmanuelem peperit.

NIL igitur mirum si de Immaculata Deiparæ Virginis Conceptione doctrinam judicio Patrum divinis Litteris consignatam, tot gravissimis eorumdem testimoniis traditam, tot illustribus venerandæ antiquitatis monumentis expressam et ce-

annṙ an mḗiḋ teanṫaca tá ain Neaṁ agur ain tálaṁ molaḋ agur altuġaḋ man ir cóir a ṫabairt ḋi. Ni 'l aon duine ann an-eolur ṫuṙ ṫairic an ṫnáṙ labairte ro, man ḋéanṙa, uaiḋe féin, a rteaċ ameart leaċta agur reap-rgnioḃana unnaiġe na h-Gaġlaire, agur ann a cuiḋ oifigiḋ, agur go b-fuilid go coitċean meargṫa ruar ionnta, agur go b-fuilid go h-ionḋual le faġail ain bann ġaċ a b-fuil ann, óir ann an naoṁ-unnaiġe ro ġlaoiḋḋan ain an Mḫaiġdean Mḫaṫain agur foillriġḋan í, man colum cáiḋ na caoin-ḋeire, man an ríor go rion faoi bláṫ, agur gleġeal go ballaċ, agur a ġ-coṁnuiḋe ġlinn, agur rion-beannuiġṫe; agur fáġann rí altuġaḋ agur ard-luaḋ man an ionnacar féin ain nan ninneaḋ uiscíḋ no oil a niaṁ, man an Gḃa nuaḋ a ġein agur a nuġ an Te a bí linn-ne 'nna Dia.

Buḋ teaġarġ agur eolur é ro a bronaḋ ain na rginneiṁ annṙ na rgnioḃan a ṫuġ Dia duinn, de néin bneiṫeaṁnaiṙ na n-Aiṫneaċ naoṁṫa; teaġarġ a ṫuġaḋar féin le ionḋa buan-tearṫar móṁ uaṫa; teaġarġ a tá a ġ-cleaċtaḋ agur a ġ-cnaḃaċt na ġ-cnioṙḋaiḋ a faġail cáil' agur ċéim; agur a tá ain ġaċ buan-leaċt tá againn o' n aimrir ir anra agur ir in-meaṙḋa aiġ na daoine; teaġarġ a ċnaoḃ-rġaoil an Gaġlair í féin agur buanuiġ ri go dainġean le bneiṫeaṁnaiṙ éiġrámail agur ain-

lebratam, ac maximo gravissimoque Ecclesiæ judicio propositam et confirmatam tanta pietate, religione et amore ipsius Ecclesiæ Pastores, populique fideles quotidie magis profiteri sint gloriati, ut nihil iisdem dulcius, nihil carius, quam ferventissimo affectu Deiparam Virginem absque labe originali conceptam ubique colere, venerari, invocare, et prædicare. Quamobrem ab antiquis temporibus Sacrorum Antistites, Ecclesiastici viri, regulares Ordines, ac vel ipsi imperatores et Reges ab hac Apostolica Sede enixe efflagitarunt, ut Immaculata sanctissimæ Dei Genitricis Conceptio veluti catholicæ fidei dogma definiretur. Quæ postulationes hac nostra quoque ætate iteratæ fuerunt ac potissimum felicis recordationis Gregorio XVI Prædecessori Nostro, ac Nobis ipsis oblatæ sunt tum ab Episcopis, tum a clero sæculari, tum a Religiosis Familiis, ac summis Principibus et fidelibus populis.

eacaṙ do-ċlíṙte :—Ní ɟoŋgnaḋ, maṙ ṙiŋ de, ma ṙiŋŋadaṙ tṁeudaiḋ na h-Gaglaiṙe, agur na ṙṁeunta ɟaḋ ṙeiŋ, áḃḃaṙ glóiṁe a ġlacaḋ ċucu ṙéiŋ, a beiṫ gaċ aon lá níoṙ mo 'na a ċeile, leiṙ an láŋ cnabaċt agur beo-ċneideaṁ maṙ aon le caoŋ-duṫnaċt, aiġ ṙoillṙiuġaḋ agur aiġ ádḃail teaġaṙġa agur eoluiṙ maṙ é ro, taoḃ Cáiḋġaḃċa na Mhaiġdine Mhuiṁe Mhaċaṙ De, aiṁ moḋ naċ naiḃ niḋ aiṁ biṫ le ṙáġail buḋ miṁe leo, no buḋ diṁe leo, 'na ó teaṙ-gnáḋ agur ġean a g-cnoide, molaḋ agur áṁdéiṁ agur glóiṁ, a ċabaiṁt aŋŋ gaċ am agur aŋŋ gaċ áit do 'n Mhaiġdean Mhuiṁe Mhaċaiṁ Dé a ġabaḋ ġaŋ ṙeacaḋ; 'a aiṁm a ġuide aiṁ gaċ ocáid, agur a cáil a luaḋ. Aiṁ an áḃḃaṙ ṙiŋ leiṙ na g-cianta do cuiṁnadaṙ d'aon ġuṫ aṁaiŋ ámḋ na h-Gaṙṙoiġ agur na Saġaiṁt agur gaċ uaċdaṙan eile eaglaiṙeaċ na h-oiṁḋ niaġalta, agur na h-impiṁḋ ṙéiŋ aŋŋ aoŋṙeaċt leiṙ na Ríġṫe, a ŋ-imbide ruaṙ aiṁ an g-caṫaoiṁ aṙṫolaċ ro go b-ṙoillṙeocaide go ḃeaċt, baṁnaŋtaċ maṙ bṁeiṫeaṁnaṙ ṙíoṁ-ċneidiṁ na h-Gaglaiṙe, guṁ ġabaḋ ġaŋ ṙeacaḋ an Mhaiġdean Mhuiṁe Mhaċaiṁ Dé. Do cuiṁeaḋ ruaṙ an imbide céadna aṁṙaṙ aŋŋ an ŋ-aimriṁ ṙéiŋ, agur go h-aiṁide, cuiṁeaḋ aṫcuiŋe aiṁ Gnegóiṁ XVI, an Ámḋ-Gaṙṙoġ a cuaiḋ noṁaiŋŋ, beaŋnaċt De le ŋ-anam, agur aiṁ a b-ṙuil ṙóṙ cuiṁne caoŋ: Agur an imbide céadna cuiṁnadaṙ oṁaiŋŋ ṙéiŋ na h-Gaṙṙoiġ agur an ċléiṁ raoġalta agur an mhuinṫiṁ niaġalta agur na h-ámḋ-ṙnioŋṙaiḋ; agur na pobail ṙíṁeunta ċṁíḋ an doṁan móṁ.

NOS itaque singulari animi Nostri gaudio hæc omnia probe noscentes, ac serio considerantes, vix dum licet immeriti arcano divinæ Providentiæ consilio ad hanc sublimem Petri Cathedram evecti totius Ecclesiæ gubernacula tractanda suscepimus, nihil certe antiquius habuimus, quam pro summa Nostra vel a teneris annis erga sanctissimam Dei Genitricem Virginem Mariam veneratione, pietate et affectu ea omnia peragere, quæ adhuc in Ecclesiæ votis esse poterant, ut beatissimæ Virginis honor augeretur, ejusque prærogativæ uberiori luce niterent. Omnem autem maturitatem adhibere volentes constituimus peculiarem VV. FF. NN. S. R. E. Cardinalium religione, consilio, ac divinarum rerum scientia illustrium Congregationem, et viros ex clero tum sæculari, tum regulari, theologicis disciplinis apprime excultos selegimus, ut ea omnia, quæ Immaculatam Virginis Conceptionem respiciunt,

Bí luat-ɣaiɲ mór, d'a bruiġ riu, aiɲ ar ġ-croide aiġ bneaċ-nuġaḋ arteaċ ann iomlan an méid ro, agur aiġ meaṁruġaḋ le deaġ-aiġné orra: Agur 'nuair nać naḃamar, giḋ nár b' fiú riuu, acт andaiġce aiɲ eiġin dé péin ruiɲ doiṁiu Dé, aiɲ Caṫaoir Naoiṁ Peadair, agur co luaċ a'r ṫoġamar oiɲeann féin niaġaladh na h-Eaglaise go léir, ní naib mid aiɲ bit eile co mór le croide againn 'na, de péin an n-ándúrnaim, an macantair móir agur reirce intine do'n Naoiṁ Athair-dean Athaire noċ do bí againn go buan ó bliaġantaiḃ an n-óige, an meud rin a éirneuġaḋ agur a ṫabairt ann ġ-ciuu a buḋ miau leir an Eaglais a déanaḋ, ionnor go meudóċaide onóir na Naoiṁ Athairne agur go m-beideaḋ a tiodlacaḋ freirialta roillén or comaiɲ an domain móir a rnuċ ġaeḋe na rían-roillré agur a lán-leur na firinne. Le buil an bail a b' feárr agur a b' foirre a cuir air an obair ro, agur go m-beideaḋ gaċ nid ann a leiṫ aṫuiġce, do cuireamar aiɲ bun co-dáil freirialta d' an deir-bnaċaraiḃ díada oilḃineaċa Cardinéalaiḃ na Naoiṁ-Eaglaise Rómánaiġe,—rin a bí niġ-óiɲdeirce mar ġeall air a ġ-caoin-ċreidim; a ġ-comairle no a n-eolur ann neiṫiḃ díada; agur do ṫoġamar rin ollamhanta ann aon-ṫeaċt leo, de 'n ġ-cléir raoġalta agur niaġalta d'a ninnead noġa mar ġeall air a n-éiġre agur rían-ṫoġlam' ann neiṫiḃ díada, ionnor go bneaṫnóċaḋir a rceaċ go ginn ann gaċ nid a bainear le caiḋ-ġaḃaḋ na Athairne Athairé, agur

accuratissime perpenderent, propriamque sententiam ad Nos deferrent. Quamvis autem Nobis ex receptis postulationibus de definienda tandem aliquando Immaculata Virginis Conceptione perspectus esset plurimorum Sacrorum Antistitum sensus, tamen Encyclicas Litteras die 2 Februarii anno 1849 Cajetæ datas ad omnes Venerabiles Fratres totius catholici orbis Sacrorum Antistites misimus, ut, adhibitis ad Deum precibus, nobis scripto etiam significarent, quæ esset suorum fidelium erga Immaculatam Deiparæ Conceptionem pietas, ac devotio, et quid ipsi præsertim Antitistes de hac ipsa definitione ferenda sentirent, quidve exoptarent, ut, quo fieri solemnius posset, supremum Nostrum judicium proferremus.

NON mediocri certe solatio affecti fuimus ubi eorumdem Venerabilium Fratrum ad Nosresponsa venerunt. Nam iidem incredibili

ɜo ʒ-cuıɲɾaıdíɾ a m-baɲaṁaıl aʒur a m-bɾıeıċaṁnar ɾéın d'a baıɲ oɾ aɲ ʒ-coṁaıɲ. Aṁeaɾʒ an ṁeıd ɾʒɾıobaɲ ɾaɲɲaɾaıɾ a ɾuaɲaṁaɲ aıʒ cuıɲ ımɾıde oɲaınn, caıd-ʒabad na Mhaıʒdıne a ɗocɾuʒad ɾa déıɲe aʒur ɾa deoıʒ, bud leuɲ dúınn ınɗı aʒur aıʒné ıomad ṁóɲ de na h-Eaɾɾoıʒ, ní déıʒ ɾın aʒur eıɫıʒ, do ċuıɲɲeaṁaɲ uaınn ó baıle Cajeta, aɲ an daɲa lá de ṁí na ɾeıbté a m-blıaʒan 1849, aıʒ aɲ n-deıɫbɲaıċɲıb, eaɾɾoıʒ an domaın ṁóɲ, leıɫɫéaċa ɣúċɲıceaɫaċa, ıonnoɾ ʒo ʒ-cuıɲɲeadíɾ ɾuaɾ- a n-ımɾıde aıʒ Dia na n-ʒɲaɾa, aʒur ʒo m-beıɲɲeadíɾ' eolur dúınn ann ɾʒɾıobaɲ aɲ an dıaṁóıd aʒur an ʒ-cɾábaċt bí a mearʒ na b-fíɲeun a bí ɾuċa ann onóɲ ʒle-ʒeınaṁaıne Buıme Dé; aʒur ʒo h-aɲɲde cad é a m-baɲaṁaıl ɾéın taob an ɾʒeul ɾın a ɗocɾuʒad aʒur báɲ aʒur baıl a bɾonad aɲ;—no cad é bud ṁıan leo ʒo n-déanɾaıde, ıonnoɾ ʒo m-béanɾaıde aɲ n-aɲd-bɾıeıċeaṁnar aɲ an nóɾ a b' ɾéaɲɲ a'ɾ a b' ɾúɲtaıʒe le 'n b' ɾeıdíɲ a ɾoıllɾıuʒad do Chɾíoɾtaıd na cɾuıɲné.

Cıɲɲte, deaɲbċa, nıoɲ ʒann an lán ɾolár a líon an ʒ-cɾoıde 'nuaıɲ ċaınıc ċuʒaınn na ɾɲeaʒɲaıd a ċuıɲnadaɲ aɲ deɲbɲaıċne dıle, na h-Eaɾɾoıʒ uaċa. Óɲ aıʒ ɾʒɾıob aɲ aıɾ ċuʒaınn le teann ulʒaıɲdíɾ, luaċ-ʒáɲe aʒur caoıɲ-ċuman,—oɲɲead ʒuɲ deacaɲ a ċneıɾtınt,—ní ɾé aṁaın ʒuɲ ċnu-

quadam jucunditate, lætitia, ac studio Nobis rescribentes non solum singularem suam, et proprii cujusque cleri, populique fidelis erga Immaculatum beatissimæ Virginis Conceptum pietatem, mentemque denuo confirmarunt, verum etiam communi veluti voto a Nobis expostularunt, ut Immaculata ipsius Virginis Conceptio supremo Nostro judicio et auctoritate definiretur. Nec minori certe interim gaudio perfusi sumus, cum VV. FF. NN. S. R. E. Cardinales commemoratæ peculiaris Congregationis et prædicti Theologi Consultores a Nobis electi pari alacritate et studio post examen diligenter adhibitum hanc de Immaculata Deiparæ Conceptione definitionem a Nobis efflagitaverint.

POST hæc, illustribus Prædecessorum Nostrorum vestigiis inhærentes, ac rite rectequeprocedere optantes indiximus et habuimus Consistorium, in quo

ċuiġdaṁ aṁṙ an ċaoiṁ-duċṁaċt ṁóṁ a ṁoċuiġdaṁ ṗéin agur a ʒ-cuid ʒ-cléiṁ, agur na ṗíṁeun a bí ṗuċa aiṁ leiṫ, a d-taob cáiṫ-ẋeiṁaṁuiṁe na Naoiṁ Ṁaiġdine Ṁuiṁe, agur ʒur orʒuiladaṁ a n-iṁcinn agur a n-aiʒné aiṁṙ duiṁn, acṫ 'nna ċeann ṙin, do ċuiṁadaṁ, maṁ m-beiṫeaḋ, d' aon ʒuċ amáin, iṁṗiḋe agur aċċuiṁʒe oṁaiṁn, ʒo rocṁóċamair le n-an n-aṁd-bṁeiṫeamnar agur an n-aṁd-ċeannar an cneideaṁ coiṫ-ċean, ʒur ʒabaḋ ʒan peacaḋ an Ṁaiġdean Ṁuiṁe. Agur a ʒ-ceaṁt-lán an tṁáṫ céadna, ní buḋ luġ-ḋé an luaṫ-ġáiṁ a líon an n-anam 'nuaiṁ ċuiṁadaṁ an deṁ-bṁaiṫṁe óiṁdeiṁce—Caṁdinaiḋ na Naoiṁ-Eaglaiṁe Roṁanaiʒé a cṁuiṁniuġaḋ 'ran co-dáil ud ṙréiṙialta, agur h-ollaṁa diaḋa éile na coṁaiṁle d' an niṁneaḋ noġa—a n-iṁṗiḋe agur a n-aċċuiṁʒe ruar cuʒainn le ḟonn ṁóṁ agur anduil a ʒ-cnoiḋe, 'n éir ċuaiṁtiuġaḋ coiṁʒialaċ agur ṙʒnúduġaḋ ṙíor, duṫṁaċtaċ a ḋeanaḋ,—ʒo ʒ-cuiṁṫeaṁur bail agur buan-ṙocṁuġaḋ aiṁ an ʒ-cneidiṁ—ʒur ʒabaḋ ʒan peacaḋ naoiṁ Ṁaṫaiṁ Dé.

'Néir na neiṫe ro a ḋéanaḋ agur aiʒ leaṁṁuiṁ ʒo dluṫ loṁʒ loṁṁaċ na b-paṗaiḋ a ċuaiḋ roṁṁaiṁn, agur lán le duil ʒaċ niḋ a ḋíṁuġaḋ maṁ ir cóiṁ agur ir ceaṁt, do ʒlaoiḋaṁaṁ le ċéile agur do ċruiṁṁaṁaṁ co-ḟuiḋeaḋ, no dáil d' an ndeṁbṁaiṫṁe óiṁdeaṁca, Caṁdinaiḋ na h-Eaglaiṁe Catoilicíʒe Roṁánaiʒe agur do ṫnaċtaṁaṁ leó aiṁ, agur le luaṫ-

Venerabiles Fratres Nostros Sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ Cardinales alloquuti sumus, eosque summa animi Nostri consolatione audivimus a Nobis exposcere, ut dogmaticam de Immaculata Deiparæ Virginis Conceptione definitionem emittere vellemus.

ITAQUE plurimum in Domino confisi advenisse temporum opportunitatem pro Immaculata sanctissimæ Dei Genitricis Virginis Mariæ Conceptione definienda, quam divina eloquia, veneranda traditio, perpetuus Ecclesiæ sensus, singularis catholicorum Antistitum, ac fidelium conspiratio et insignia Prædecessorum Nostrorum acta, constitutiones mirifice illustrant atque declarant; rebus omnibus diligentissime perpensis, et assiduis, fervidisque ad Deum precibus effusis, minime cunctandum Nobis esse censuimus supremo Nostro judicio Immaculatam ipsius Virginis Conceptionem sancire, definire, atque ita pientissimis catholici orbis desi-

ʒáɲ mór anama ann rin do ċualamar iad a ċur impide ormainn ʒo m-buð ṫoil linn an m-breiṫeamnar barantamail, buɲuʒdararać—ʒur ʒabað ʒan peacað an Mʒaiʒdean Muire Maṫair Dé,—a ṗoillriúʒað do Ċriortaiðib na Cruinne.

Agus an ádbar rin, tá rinn lán de doċúr laidin 'ran Tiʒearna ʒur ṫainic an t-am oiread ann an dual an breiṫeamnar barantamail ro a ṫabairt—ʒur ʒabað ʒan peacað an Mʒaiʒdean Muire Maṫair Dé. Cheideamh é ro a craob-rʒaoilad ʒo slinn a m-briatarais úr-labarṫaċa Dé féin; a tá a ʒ-comnuide ʒo roillérr or an ʒ-comhair a m-buan-teaʒarʒ na ʒ-cianta; agus a tá le fáʒail a rían-ċial na h-Eaglaise:—cheideamh a dearbtar a ʒ-ceilebar ʒan cliseað eidir na h-Earpoiʒ agus na fíneunta; a ṗoillriʒṫar agus a ʒairṫear ʒo h-ard air nór ionʒantać ann ʒníomarṫaiḃ slóinmara agus a neaċtaiḃ a rinnadar na Papaiḃ a ṫuiḃ Romhainn-ne, air Cataoir Naoimh Peadair, aiʒ breaṫnuʒað arteać le croide lán de ċunam air ʒać nið, agus aiʒ cuir ruar le téaʒar, urnuiʒe buan aiʒ Dia, ir í ro an m-baramail, nać cóir dunn failliʒe a déanad aiʒ tabairt an m-breiṫeamnais-uʒdarais ʒur ʒabað ʒan Peacað an Naoim-Óiʒ, agus an cheideamh céadna ro a neaċtuʒað agus a ṫocmuʒað; agus leis an mheodan ro, rarað intne

deriis, Nostræque in ipsam sanctissimam Virginem pietati satisfacere, ac simul in Ipsa Unigenitum Filium suum Dominum Nostrum Jesum Christum magis atque magis honorificare, cum in Filium redundet quidquid honoris et laudis in Matrem impenditur.

QUARE postquam nunquam intermisimus in humilitate et jejunio privatas Nostras et publicas Ecclesiæ prèces Deo Patri per Filium Ejus offerre, et Spiritus Sancti virtute mentem Nostram dirigere, et confirmare dignaretur, implorato universæ cœlestis Curiæ præsidio, et advocato cum gemitibus Paraclito Spiritu, eoque sic adspirante, ad honorem Sanctæ et Individuæ Trinitatis, ad decus et ornamentum Virginis Deiparæ, ad exaltationem Fidei catholicæ, et Christianæ Religionis augmentum, auctoritate Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, beatorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli, ac Nostra declaramus pronunciamus et

a tabairt do catoilíceacha na cruinne; rarad d' an ndiaidhidh féin do 'n naoidh Aingeal;—agus 'nna ceann sin, aig breathadh andcéim' oifigi-re, ónóir a h-aon Aighe an d-tigearna Iosa Criosd 'ra am céadna a árdughadh agus leathnughadh níos mo go móir, ó tarla gur síos a rad, go rachfaidh air an mac cia air bith ónóir no altughadh a tugtar do 'n Athair.

D'a brigh sin le umhlacht agus le crosgadh do chuireamar suas an n-impidhe féin, ann aonfheacht le impidhe agus urnaighe na h-Eaglaise go léir, 'g a n-oirnéil do Dia an athair tre a aon mac, go n-deonóchadh se an n-intinn a dírighadh agus a neartughadh le brigh beannachtach an Spioraid Naoimh: Do chuireamar impidhe air cuairt na b-flaithear go h-iomlan cuideadh linn; agus le ornaighil mhór agus gáir chaointe do ghlaodhamar air an Spioraid Naomh an comfortóir. 'N éir an guidhe agus an impidhe so a déanadh, agus faoi righnadh an Spioraid Naoimh, agus ann onóir na Trianóidhe naomhtha, dodealbhughthe, ann glóire agus ann gloinnachta na Mhaighdine Muire Mhachair Dé, ann árd-néime an Chreidimh Catoilicighe, agus cum an chreideamh Criostaighil a ghleic go fóir-leachan; le ughdaras, ina ceann sin, agus le onóughadh an d-Tighearna Iosa Criosd agus na naoidh Apstol Peadair agus Póil, agus leis an úghdaras agus an árd-ceannas fuaramar féin, Follrighmuid, dearbhamuid, agus deimhnighmuid, gur chaob-ghaoil

definimus, doctrinam, quæ tenet beatissimam Virginem Mariam in primo instanti suæ Conceptionis fuisse singulari omnipotentis Dei gratia et privilegio, intuitu meritorum Christi Jesu Salvatoris humani generis, ab omni originalis culpæ labe præservatam immunem, esse a Deo revelatam, atque idcirco ab omnibus fidelibus firmiter constanterque credendam. Quapropter si qui secus ac a Nobis definitum est, quod Deus avertat, præsumpserint corde sentire, ii noverint, ac porro sciant, se proprio judicio condemnatos, naufragium circa fidem passos esse, et ab unitate Ecclesiæ defecisse, ac præterea facto ipso suo semet pœnis a jure statutis subjicere si quod corde sentiunt, verbo aut scripto, vel alio quovis externo modo significare ausi fuerint.

REPLETUM quidem est gaudio os Nostrum et lingua Nostra exultatione, atque humillimas maximasque Christo Jesu Do-

Dia an teagarg ro, agur d'a brug rin, gur ceapt go gac uile fiosh-chiosdaid a chreiftint go dairgean agur go buan-laidir, gur gabad an Naomh-Naigdean Muire a prisomh-momeid d'a geinamhuin, gle, glan agur faor o gac uile fmal de Peacad na rinrine, tre gnara agur feach-dlighe no feachtnacht cumanac Dé, agur ann geall ain faotar agur farad Jofa Chrioft, flanuigtora an chine daonna. Mar rin dé, ma bideann dream ain bit ann,—'gur nar leigid Dia go m-beidéad—co dana a'r go fmuainiocad riad ann a g-croidhe adhuigad de banamhail can é ro, noc do deanbamar agur do foghuimar, tuigadir, agur bidead eolur maith aca go b-fuilid ó n-a m-bheitheamhnar féin faoi daon-bheith Uainn-ne;—gur fulang riad longbriseadh taob a g-cheidim, agur go b-fuilid ain feachan amuig ar mannac aonda na h-Eaglaife; agur 'nna ceann rin, go b-fuil riad ain an m-ball agur ain an b-feacht, faoi 'n bpianúr agur daon-cain tá ceapuigte féin dligh agur cóirne, ma gnídir a m-banamhail bheugad a foillrigad no a nocfugad a g-cainte, no a fgnibadh no le gleur luadta ain bit le 'n b' féidir a tarbanad.

Dar go deimhin tá an m-beal lionta le luach-gain agur an dteangga le ul-gairdear;—agur go h-uimal ó chroidhe beinamuid mile buidheachar agur altugad, agur go deo agur go brath béanfamuid buidheachar buan agur altúgad d'ar d-Tigearna Jofa Chrioft, man geall, ar a mór-chineáltar, gur deónuig Sé an dualgar uaral

mino Nostro agimus et semper agemus gratias, quod singulari suo beneficio Nobis licet immerentibus concesserit, hunc honorem atque hanc gloriam et laudem sanctissimæ suæ Matri offerre et decernere. Certissima vero spe et omni prorsus fiducia nitimur fore, ut ipsa beatissima Virgo, quæ tota pulcha et Immaculata venenosum crudelissimi serpentis caput contrivit, et salutem attulit mundo, quæque Prophetarum, Apostolorumque præconium, et honor Martyrum, omniumque Sanctorum lætitia et corona, quæque tutissimum cunctorum periclitantium perfugium, et fidissima auxiliatrix, ac totius terrarum orbis potentissima apud unigenitum Filium suum mediatrix, et conciliatrix, ac præclarissimum Ecclesiæ sanctæ decus et ornamentum, firmissimumque præsidium, cunctas semper interemit hæreses, et fideles populos, gentesque a maximis omnis generis calamitatibus eripuit, ac Nos ipsos a tot ingruentibus periculis liberavit; velit validissimo suo patrocinio duinn féin, gid nar b' fhú rinn,—an onóir mór ro ann aonfheacht le glóir agus ard-néim a toil-beirt agus a aithghabh d'a Mhathair beannuighthe. Ir í-re 'an Naomh-Oigh, uil-aluin, agus glé, glan a brir ceann nimneach na Feirte fiaodha;—í-re a thug aig an domhan domhb ro, rlainte; ir í cail agus clú na b-Fáig agus na n-Aspsol; ir onóir na máirtíneach í; gáirdeochar agus glóir na naomh go léir; cuimhnic cinnse, fíor, na muintirne tá ann fán; bean taca ir dilre í, agus eidilmheadantóir agus bean-chúantuighthe an-chumachtach í eidir a h-aon Mhac agus daoine an domhain mór; ir glóir agus glonnacht ir glinne na h-Eaglaire í; an cul-báine ir daingne ann bíd í; do buail rí fíor agus do leag rí ann lán gach eiricéit a d' far anfann; agus na fíneun agus gach cinnse cnfortamail faoi 'n gnéin do fabail rí ó gach gont géur, ó galar, agus gach gád bud mheara; agus Sinn-féin do faor Sí o'n lomad oile agus guail a bi ag teannad onainn.—Mhan rin de, tá dochéur mór againn agus muinighin laidir go n-deonóchaid rí trí a cumhachtach an meud ro a déanad; buaid a thabairt d'an Naomh Mhathair an Eaglair ann gach dochúi agus uircóid déantar ann a h-agaid; an fearr a'r bann di or cionn gach mheabhail bheuzach; agus go n-beidead rí ann gach tír agus ann gach áit, gach aon la, nír mó na chéile, faoi bail, faoi blath agus bireach, agus go n-beidead rí a riaghlad ann gach áit ó 'n muir foir go d-ti an muir fiar, agus ó bruach na h-amhaine

nio efficere, ut sancta Mater Catholica Ecclesia cunctis amotis difficultatibus, cunctisque profligatis erroribus ubicumque gentium, ubicumque locorum quotidie magis vigeat, floreat, ac regnet a mari usque ad mare et a flumine usque ad terminos orbis terrarum, omnique pace, tranquillitate, ac libertate fruatur, ut rei veniam, ægri medelam, pusilli corde robur, afflicti consolationem, periclitantes adjutorium obtineant, et omnes errantes discussa mentis caligine ad veritatis ac justitiæ semitam redeant, ac fiat unum ovile, et unus pastor.

Go d-tí na n-imeal ir fearr áit chuinne na talmhan; agus go mbeidheadh rí aig feilb na réilte agus an t-fuamhnair agus na faoistreóra;—agus 'nna ceann sin, go b-fuigheadh an dream daoithe, maiteanar; an t-aor tinn, flainte; an t-aor lag-chroidheach, misneach agus laidireacht; an t-aor anfhoghach, fólar;—an t-aor cliste, conghnamh; agus an mhuintir tá ann fheachtain taob thaidhbh, go gcaithfadair uatha gach baille agus meanbhail inntine, agus go b-fillfidh siad ann air ais carad na síthne agus na cómhé, agus go mbeidheadh aon mhaintreach amhain ann, agus aon threudaidh amhain ann.

AUDIANT hæc Nostra verba omnes Nobis carissimi Catholicæ Ecclesiæ filii, et ardentiori usque pietatis, religionis, et amoris studio pergant colere, invocare, exorare beatissimam Dei Genitricem Virginem Mariam sine labe originali conceptam, atque ad hanc dulcissimam misericordiæ et gratiæ Matrem in omnibus periculis, angustiis, necessita-

Eistidh ann gclann dílis na gcumann na bhfiadhna fo uainn—clann na h-Eaglaise catholicighe, agus le fonn inis tréagarthighe de chaoidhchreidh, threidheamh, agus gnáth teighidh ann aghaidh ann a mbuanchaidhneadh, agus aig cuinn fuar aithcuinge agus imbidhe aig an Naomh Mhaighdean Mhuire Mhathair De a geinnidh gan cháin peacaidh na fionnsa; agus ann gach uile ghadh, guairt, agus geur-earbha, ann aimsir na leathroime agus léir tréighdir lán de mhuirnighin aig Mhathair fáin, fuaire fo na throcaire agus na nghrafa. Óir ní b-fuil fiadh ann bís an chóir duinn a beith eaglach faoi, nidh ann bís an chóir duinn a beith ann eadoithche faoi, 'nuair tá fíre an d-treoir; an

tibus, rebusque dubiis ac trepidis cum omni fiducia confugiant. Nihil enim timendum nihilque desperandum Ipsa duce, Ipsa auspice, Ipsa propitia, Ipsa protegente, quæ maternum sane in nos gerens animum, nostræque salutis negotia tractans de universo humano genere est sollicita, et cœli terræque Regina a Domino constituta, ac super omnes Angelorum choros Sanctorumque ordines exaltata adstans a dextris Unigeniti Filii sui Domini Nostri Jesu Christi maternis suis precibus validissime impetrat, et quod quærit invenit, ac frustrari non potest.

DENIQUE ut ad universalis Ecclesiæ notitiam hæc Nostra de Immaculata Conceptione beatissimæ Virginis Mariæ definitio deducatur, has Apostolicas Nostras Litteras, ad perpetuam rei memoriam extare voluimus; mandantes ut harum transumptis, seu exemplis etiam impressis, manu alicujus Notarii publici subd-tuar feuimar, ar z-carad-tnocaillead, agur an rzlaċ cerauṫaċ. Ta aiċi buinn cnoide maṫarda fíor-cumaṫaċ, agur aiz zlacad orṫi féin zuoċaid ar flaṫuiġṫe, tá rí lán de ċuṫam taob ar ċinne daona zo h-iomlán: ir bean-uiġan í ailt neam agur ailt talam aiz an tiġearna é féin, agur anduiġṫe or cionn coiṫiu na n-Aingiod zo h-uile agur ond na Naom, tá rí 'na fearad ailt dear-lám a Mhic aon-zeinte an d-Tiġearna Jora Criort, agur le n-a h-eidiu-guide cumaċtaċ tá ri déanad guide zo h-eifeaċtaċ; óir zaċ uid iarraidann rí fazann rí, agur ní feidir le n-a guide a beiṫ gan toradh.

Fa deire agur fa deoiz, ionnor zo d-tiocfad an bneiṫeamnar barantaṁail ro a zniḋmuid, gur zabad an Mhaiġdean Mhuire gan peacad, ann eólur na h-Eaglaise zo léir, ir ré ar mian zo m-beidead an leitir apstolac ro ailt bun ċum buan-ċuimne a ċoṁzbail ruar ailt an uid ċéadna; agur beiṫeamuid ordugad zo m-beidead ailt na coiṫid agur ailt na h-earlomlaiṫid éló-buailte aiz a b-fuil faoi lám ainm fir-rzniobṁe publiġe, agur feula neaċ oile-deirc, ann and-déin fan Eaglais,—an mear céadna a'r tuzdar do na leitriḋ ro an tráṫ tarbantar agur foillriġṫear iad.

scriptis, et sigillo personæ in ecclesiastica dignitate constitutæ munitis, eadem prorsus fides ab omnibus adhibeatur, quæ ipsis præsentibus adhiberetur, si forent exhibitæ, vel ostensæ.

NULLI ergo hominum liceat paginam hanc Nostræ declarationis, pronunciationis ac definitionis infringere, vel ei ausu temerario adversari et contraire. Si quis autem hoc attentare præsumpserit, indignationem, omnipotentis Dei, ac beatorum Petri et Pauli Apostolorum ejus, se noverit incursurum.

DATUM Romæ apud Sanctum Petrum Anno Incarnationis Dominicæ millesimo octingentesimo quinquagesimo quarto, VI Idus Decembris anno MDCCCLIV, Pontificatus Nostri anno nono.

PIUS PP. IX.

Agus fiu de, ní b-fuil se ceadúnaċ aiġ neaċ aill bíċ a buaiġt leis an dúlleoġ so ann a b-fuil sgríobta acht síos, foillsiġte, deanbta agus deimniġte uaiġn-se; no le dúlan gan feidm a dul ann a aġaid, no a nuaḋ naċ síos é. Agus tá duine air bíċ le faġail a glacaḋ air féin a déanaḋ, bíḋaḋ síos aige gur ċuil se feargaġ De an Uile-ċumaċtaiġ agus Peadair agus Naoṁ Póil.

Tugta aig Caṫair na Roiṁe a g-Cill Naoiṁ Peadair a m-bliaġan 'néis ioṁdolmuiġte ar d-Tiġearna míle ocṫ ceud agus an ceaṫarnaḋ-deug air da-fiċeaḋ; an t-ocṫmaḋ lá de mí meaḋan an Geimṁe a m-bliaġan 1854; 'san naoṁaḋ bliaġan d' ar naoṁ-naċdarnaċt.

PIUS PP. IX.

This Irish version has the following approbation.

APPROBATIO

"Hæc versio Bullæ INEFFABILIS in Celticam Hiberniæ linguam à Reverendo Ulico Josepho Bourke elaborata, sensum originalis penitus reddit, nec ei quædam venustas de-est et elegantia linguæ.

JOANNES, Archiepiscopus Tuamensis.

Die 2a Octobris, 1865.

[Locus sigilli.]

PIAZZA D'ESPAGNA

Column and Statue of Immaculate Conception, Rome, Italy

CHAPTER XIII

SPANISH DEVOTION TO MARY IMMACULATE

Glorias de Espana en defensa de la Inmaculada Concepcion de Maria *

P. J. Seisdedos, S.J.

En primer lugar sirva de grandioso vestíbulo al monumento de la creencia universal en la Concepción Inmaculada de María dentro de España, la relación que existe entre este dulce misterio y el templo levantado en Zaragoza para honrar las glorias de la Virgen del Pilar. He aquí lo que no ha mucho escribió un ilustrado publicista:

"Bien conocidos son los dos puntos esenciales que abarca la piadosa y antigua tradición histórica del templo del Pilar, autorizada por el rezo del oficio divino en la solemnidad de la primitiva consagración de aquel augusto santuario en la fiesta solemnísima del 12 de Octubre.[1] El primer punto se refiere a la erección y dedicación que el apóstol Santiago el *Mayor* hizo del oratorio que suele llamarse *capilla angélica,* a honra y bajo la advocación de Nuestra Señora, viviendo ésta en carne mortal o antes de su gloriosa Asunción a los cielos. El segundo punto declara que, rodando los siglos, se vió aquel pequeño templo recrecido por otro mucho más amplio y suntuoso, que tomó antiguamente, y retiene el nombre *de Santa Maria del Pilar,* en razón del Pilar marmóreo que sostenía y sostiene la efigie de la Madre de Dios, y es, como lo fué a toda la nación, objeto de grandísima piedad y concurso.

Del primer punto se desprende, en sentir de Benedicto XIV,[2] que un privilegio tan singular como el que en-

* *From Ensayo de Teología Popular Mariana.*

[1] Lección Vi de Maitines.

[2] *De servorum Dei beatificatione et sanctorum canonizatione,* lib. IV, part. II, cap. X, núm. 20.

tendió Santiago que debía a la Virgen Madre de Dios, mientras ella vivía en carne mortal sobre la tierra, no puede explicarse sino porque sabía, creía y manifestaba de palabra y de obra el Apóstol la pureza y santidad de que estuvo siempre dotada la soberana Señora: pureza y santidad tan grande y tan sin mancilla, que, *fuera de la de Dios su verdadero Hijo, no cabe que otra mayor exista o se piense.* De aquí se deduce que el templo del Pilar es monumento apostólico de la Inmaculada Concepción.

La consecuencia es lógica; porque, como observan los teólogos, ponderando las palabras subrayadas de San Anselmo, no sería la pureza de la Virgen la mayor, fuera de la de Dios, si no hubiese sido María libre de toda culpa desde el primer instante de su ser personal.

Los hechos históricos, de los que se infiere tamaña, gloria, bien examinados a la luz de los monumentos y documentos de los testificantes, se imponen a la convicción de todo espíritu imparcial y sereno. En 1775 el R. P. Fr. Manuel Risco, en el tomo XXX de la *España sagrada,* soltó, una por una, todas las objeciones que con algún viso de razón se habían hecho hasta entonces; examinó con solidez y acierto los documentos positivos que afirman la tradición, no sin descartar los apócrifos y expurgar los adulterados, y sentó las conclusiones siguientes al pie de su disertación doctísima:

"1. La tradición del Pilar es digna de todo aprecio y veneración por su origen, por su continuación y por el común y general consentimiento que se ha merecido entre las gentes y escritores hasta los últimos siglos.

"2. Jamás se ha encontrado algún hecho o testimonio coetáneo o cercano al tiempo en que se determina su principio que la contradiga y justifique su falsedad.

"3. Sin embargo de no estar definida o probada, por leerse en el tenor de las Bulas pontificias,[3] se le añadió por este

medio algún grado de autoridad, pues la creyeron por tan verosímil o probable, que la insertaron en documentos dignos de reverencia.

"4. En nuestros tiempos ha sido impugnada por algunos críticos severos y controvertida en la sagrada Congregación;[4] esto más la ha servido de lustre y de gloria que de obscuridad y abatimiento.

"5. Todo lo que se ha opuesto contra ella se ha reconocido por ineficaz para improbarla, como consta de las actas de la curia,[5] de Benedicto XIV y de los Bolandistas.

"6. Finalmente, nuestra célebre tradición se halla al presente en tal grado de firmeza y verdad, que no bastan conjeturas para impugnarla con prudencia, y son necesarias noticias ciertas o probanzas de grandísimo fundamento. Si estas no se exhibieren, siempre deberá perseverar en la victoria y triunfo, que está declarado en su favor."

En el siglo XIX y en los años que corren del presente, los documentos nuevamente encontrados y examinados en sus propias fuentes[6] han venido a confirmar plenamente[7] el resultado al que llegaron los dos primeros autores de la *España Sagrada*. Por lo tocante a los monumentos, que podrían multiplicarse con gran provecho de la historia zaragozana por medio de excavaciones arqueológicas, básteme citar los dos sarcófagos cristianos de época romana hallados en las catacumbas de Santa Engracia, que representan a la Virgen Santísima en el misterio de su Asunción gloriosa.[8]

[3] A partir de la de Calixto III en 1456.

[4] De Ritos.

[5] Romana.

[6] *Razón y Fe*, tomos I-IV.

[7] *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia*, t. XLIV.

[8] Hübner: *Inscriptionum Hispaniae christianorum supplementum*, pág. III. Berlin. 1900.

Por uno de ellos se nombran Santiago el *Mayor,* San Pedro y San Pablo[9] y ningún otro de los Apóstoles."[10]

Conforme a esta gloriosa tradición, la fe de la Iglesia española en la Concepción inmaculada de María fué arraigándose más y más en el suelo bendito de España; y así se comprende la solicitud con que los Padres de los Concilios toledanos se empeñaron en asegurar a los fieles sobre esta hermosa creencia. Y a propósito de esto, son dignas de singular mención las palabras que al misterio de la inmaculada concepción de María dedicó el Concilio XI de Toledo, celebrado en tiempo de Wamba, el año 675, y en cuyo preámbulo se consigna: "Creemos que de las tres (divinas) Personas sola la persona del Hijo, para libertar al género humano, tomó verdadera (naturalezza) humana... de la *Santa e inmaculada María Virgen.*"[11] El Sr. La Fuente (*Historia de la Virgen,* tomo II, pag. 20), de quien se toma este antiguo monumento, con razón se entusiasma diciendo: "La idea de la Concepción inmaculada no era una cosa desconocida en la Iglesia visigoda, siquiera no tuviera fiesta.

El Concilio XI de Toledo, al hacer la exposición del dogma de la Trinidad y de la Encarnación, en su magnífico preámbulo llama ya a la Madre de Jesús le *Santa e inmaculada Virgen María,* y esto con una sencillez, con una espontaneidad tal, que se echa de ver en la contextura de la frase cuán arraigada era la creencia, y cuán corriente esa idea en España.

Consuélense, pues, los devotos (de María) en saber que ya en el siglo VII en España nuestros concilios afianzaban

[9] El dia 29 de Junio del presente año, jubilar de la definición dogmática de la Inmaculada Concepción, promulgó la *Gaceta de Madrid* la Real orden, que declara Monumento Nacional el templo metropolitano del Pilar de Zaragoza.

[10] P. Fidel Fita, S. J. Articulo publicado en el número extraordinario de *Razón y Fe,* Diciembre de 1914, página 33.

[11] Edición regia de la Biblioteca de Madrid en 1808, pág. 473.

la pia tradición, y si no había la fiesta, existía la creencia, que es lo principal en el asunto."

Gloria es también de España el testimonio del beato franciscano y mártir Ramón Lull, uno de los que más se adelantaron a defender el dogma de la Inmaculada Concepción, como consta, entre otras fuentes, en su obra *De Immaculata Beatae Virginis Conceptione* (ed. de Barcelona, 1901, página 132). No es fácil creer por eso que este glorioso campeón se adelantase al celebérrimo Juan Duns Escoto en tan hermosa tarea, como algunos piensan; pero de todos modos influyó mucho, al menos en España, sobre todo en la Corona de Aragón, para fomentar con grande entusiasmo la creencia *piadosa*. En efecto, Juan I de Aragón en 1391 expidió un decreto en Zaragoza, por el que mandaba que se celebrase anualmente la festividad de la Concepción de la Virgen en la capilla de su palacio real de Barcelona.[12] Ya en el año anterior de 1390 el Municipio de Barcelona había ordenado que se guardase, previo acuerdo de la autoridad eclesiástica, con gran solemnidad la fiesta de la Inmaculada Concepción.[13] En 14 de Marzo de 1394, por decreto fechado en Valencia, mandó el mismo Rey Don Juan I que se celebrase la fiesta en todos sus dominios, imponiendo pena de destierro a los que impugnasen la gran prerrogativa de la Madre de Dios.

Por lo que toca a los Concilios más célebres de la Cristiandad que influyeron en asegurar tan consoladora doctrina, es muy digno de mención el de Basilea, el cual, según el plan que nos hemos propuesto se alega únicamente por la parte que tomó en él nuestro teólogo Juan de Segovia, que escribió excelentes tratados para defender el misterio de la

[12] Bofarull: *Historia de Cataluña*, t. V, c. I, p. 61, Barcelona, 1877.

[13] Lib. de Acuerdos del Consejo de Ciento, citado por el P. Fita. Memoria histórico-jurídica sobre el titulo 3.° del Lib. I de las Constituciones de Cataluña, p. 50.

Inmaculada y echó por tierra los argumentos de los adversarios.

No menos digna de memoria fué la intervención que tuvo en el Concilio de Trento el eminentísimo Cardenal D. Pedro Pacheco, Obispo de Jaén, a quien se adhirieron la mayor parte de los Padres de tan respetable asamblea, y sobre todo los Obispos de Astorga, Cádiz, Huesca y Canarias, hasta que por fin, a instancias del mismo sabio Cardenal, el Concilio, después de asegurada la definición sobre la existencia del pecado primitivo, tuvo a bien declarar que no era su intención comprender en él (el decreto de la propagación del pecado original) a la Virgen, ni acerca de Ella declarar nada por entonces.

Con estos hermosísimos precedentes, que honran sobremanera a nuestra nación, se explica lo que se lee en una apreciable publicación moderna: "Por esta época (es decir, a principios del siglo XVII) se obligó la Universidad de Granada a defender la Inmaculada Concepción con *voto de sangre,* es decir, comprometiéndose a dar la vida y derramar la sangre, si era necesario, por defender este misterio. Fueron sucesivamente imitando este ejemplo gran número de cabildos, ciudades, reinos y órdenes militares.

También fueron multiplicándose desde comienzo del siglo XVII las Corporaciones y Sociedades, tanto religiosas como civiles, y aun Estados, que adoptaron por patrona a la Virgen en el misterio de su Inmaculada Concepción.

Y lo que es más importante, los Reyes y Emperadores y las cortes de los reinos comenzaron a pedir, con admirable constancia y con una insistencia de que hay pocos ejemplos en la historia, *la declaración dogmática.*[14]

Qué resta sino fomentar dentro de nosotros mismos y entre

[14] *Enciclopedia universal ilustrada europeo-americana,* de Espasa, t. 14, art. "Concepción Inmaculada". Teol., página 921, col. II. De este artículo se ha tomado además alguna otra noticia bibliográfica sobre el mismo asunto.

cuantos quieran escucharnos, el más ardiente amor a la Reina celestial, que distinguió entre todas las demás naciones a España como a su rica herencia y depositaria de su amor y protección?

¡Oh quién pudiera dominar en los corazones de todo el mundo, pero señaladamente en los de cuantos pertenecen a estos reinos formados al calor de la devoción a esta Madre bendita del Pilar, para que nunca dejasen de vivir consagrados a la defensa y culto de la Virgen Inmaculada! ¡Oh gran Madre de Dios, Madre de todos los hombres, por vuestra gran misericordia no despreciéis a estos hijos vuestros aunque indignos a causa de su ingratitud; antes redoblad vuestro incesante amor y protección en favor nuestro, concediéndonos las más poderosas gracias para que con ellas seamos hasta la muerte esclavos del dogma sacrosanto de vuestra Inmaculada Concepción, y al fin exhalemos el último suspiro exclamando como nuestros mayores: Bendita y alabada sea la pura, limpia e inmaculada concepción de María Santísima desde el primer instante de su ser natural.

Además de lo expuesto anteriormente, falta mucho por decir acerca de las muestras que en la nación española se dieron a favor de tan consoladora verdad: fijémonos en la célebre Universidad de Salamanca, sobre la cual es muy digno de notarse lo que con muy excelente acuerdo se has escrito no hace mucho. La semilla que arrojaron los teólogos concepcionistas del siglo xv cayó en tierra propicia y sazonada, y bien pronto llegó a granazón y produjo sabrosos frutos. Aquella opinión escarnecida y vilipendiada a los comienzos, erguía poco después su cabeza coronada de esplendor como una reina, y contaba por centenares los sabios que le hacían la corte y se agrupaban en torno de su bandera.

¿Quién será capaz de recitar los nombres de los teólogos y jurisconsultos enamorados del misterio, que brotaron en el

siglo de oro, como de caballo troyano, del seno de esta Universidad? Baste recordar que en Trento, el Concilio más docto que han conocido las edades, y en las Universidades europeas y americanas, maestros educados a los pechos de esta escuela vertieron los tesoros de su ciencia en defensa de la embelesadora prerrogativa de la Reina de los Angeles. Y ¿cómo no? Si curso hubo en que frisaron los alumnos matriculados en 8.000,[15] que recibían las enseñanzas de profesores tan resueltos y ardientes partidarios de la pura Concepción como Castro, Córdoba, Vega, Vegosillo, Azpilcueta, Palacios, Martinez, Silíceo, Ovando, Ciruelo, Peroza, Soto, Curiel, León, Peña, Antolínez, Salazar, Ponce, Zumel, etc. Si casi todos los conventos y los famosos Colegios Mayores, que se cobijaban bajo el espléndido manto de la Universidad eran verdaderas almácigas y viveros, que nutrían las legiones concepcionistas. De ahí que se vinieran encima, casi sin echarlo de ver, el siglo de oro de la Inmaculada, que bien merece este dictado el siglo XVII. Desbordóse entonces el fervor, y rompiéronse las cataratas y diques del entusiasmo por la Inmaculada. El P. Castelví, saltando la valla de mal reprimidos respetos, defiende en conclusiones públicas la definibilidad del misterio; Vigachoaga, Calderón, Sosa, Miranda, Manrique, Velázquez, Cornejo, Pinto, Conrio, Laserna, Waddingo, Francisco de León, Nieremberg, Tirso González y otros mil hacen sudar los tórculos con obras concepcionistas veneros de erudición, aunque no siempre limpias de la herrumbre de las pasiones; el Prelado D. Luis Fernández de Córdoba congrega el Sínodo diocesano, que dispone se guarde bajo precepto lo fiesta de la Concepción, concediendo cuarenta días de indulgencia y perdón a los que ayunen su víspera; el muy noble Consejo jura ante la Virgen de la Vega derramar hasta la última gota de sangre en

[15] Vidal y Díaz: *Memoria de la Universidad de Salamanca*, Apéndice VI.

defensa del misterio; erígense varias fundaciones piadosas bajo la advocación de la Inmaculada; los obispos Sosa y Trejo, a la voz del Monarca, preparan su partida a Roma para obtener del Pontifice el suspirado decreto en pro del privilegio; Rois y Mendoza, Manrique, Waddingo, Velázquez, Elizalde se granjean un puesto en la Junta de la Concepción; el Españoleto traslada al lienzo lo primorosa Inmaculada que en sus sueños de artista había fantaseado, y la manda a la iglesia de las Agustinas para que sea su mejor ornamento; el franciscano Alfonso Pérez canta en dulces y sonoros versos las bellezas de la Virgen sin mancilla, y Matute, Carabias, Ponce, Hurtado, Antonio de la Magdalena, publican desde el púlpito sus alabanzas con todo el fuego de su arrebatadora elocuencia. A tan riquísimo anillo de esplendores faltaba la perla que lo realzase. La Universidad, como tal, había permanecido impasible y ajena a ese movimiento. Una carta de Felipe III, leida en el Claustro de Diputados en 7 de Agosto de 1617, y después en el pleno de 19 de Agosto, vino a despertarla de su letargo. En ella ordenábale el Rey que instase a su Santidad para que diera cabo al negocio. Apresuróse a poner en ejecución los deseos de su Majestad, y el 5 de Septiembre reuníanse los teólogos para deliberar sobre la proposición regia, que se aprobó por 12 votos contra 3. Siete dias más tarde se convocaba el Claustro pleno, que ratificó la sentencia de los teólogos. Desde este punto y hora hizo suya la Universidad la opinión piadosa. Ni se agotó con esto su celo mariano. En 7 de Abril de 1618 acordó establecer por Estatuto que todos los graduandos desde bachiller en adelante, jurasen sostener la pureza original de María; el 28 de Octubre del mismo año daba el hermoso ejemplo de hacer en manos del Prelado el dicho juramento, y para que se conservara indeleble su memoria y la devoción a María, sin pecado conce-

bida, nunca se resfriara ni amortiguara, decretó en Claustro de 26 de Julio de 1618 que el postrer domingo de Octubre, aniversario del juramento, se *haga la fiesta de Nuestra Señora de la Concepción perpetuamente, para siempre jamás.* Asi coronó con una más su brillante diadema de glorias."[16]

Júzguese ahora si podrá tenerse por exagerado lo que a continuación afirma otro escritor no menos amante de las glorias patrias. "¿Ha sido España, dice, la nación que más ha trabajado por la definición dogmática de la Inmaculada Concepción? Esto sí que ni admite duda ni pide funestos esfuerzos para demostrarlo.

España es casi la única nación que ha luchado, permítase la frase, en esta materia, que ha luchado heroicamente por la definición dogmática. España ha hecho por la definición dogmática esfuerzos tan gigantescos que en su comparación desaparecen los pocos que han hecho otras naciones. *España ha sido el instrumento de la providencia divina para allanar el camimo a la definición del misterio.*

Esto no lo digo yo, ni lo ha dicho ningún español apasionado por su patria. Lo ha dicho un extranjero, Mgr. Malou, Obispo de Brujas, en Bélgica,[17] y lo ha repetido otro extranjero, el P. Le Bachelet, jesuíta francés,[18] ambos conocedores como pocos, y ambos diligentísimos escritores, de la historia del dogma.

He aquí una gloria nacional legítima, si las hay, pura y sin mancha, como el misterio sobre que versa, pero tal vez de gran parte de los españoles ignorada o mal conocida. Gloria nacional que España ha ganado, no por sus hijos, sino por

[16] P. Pérez Goyena en su articulo titulado *La Concepción Immaculada de la Virgen y la Universidad de Salamanca* en el siglo XV, párr. VII, en el núm. extraor. ya titado, pág. 93 y sig.

[17] *L'Immaculée Concept. de la Bienheureuse V. M. considerée comme dogme de foi.* Bruxelles, 1857; t. I, Preface, pág. xx.

[18] *L'Immaculée Conception. Courte histoire d'un dogme.* Deuxième Partie, L'Occident. Paris, 1903, pág. 51.

sí misma o por sus legítimos representantes. Por sí misma, y en esto es única en la Historia, acudiendo su Reino en forma de Reinos a solicitar del Sumo Pontífice la definición del dogma, por sus representantes legítimos, Monarcas y Prelados, que han obtenido de la Silla Apostólica los favores con que a ella ha ido caminando la *sentencia pía.*

Ningún reino o nación, que sepamos, ha hecho nada por sí mismo para obtener la definición de la Inmaculada, sino España y Portugal cuando dependia de la Corona de España. Ninguno por sus Reyes sus Prelados y sus Iglesias ha clamado con más fuertes y más constantes súplicas a la Sede Apostólica, pidiendo la suspirada definición.

Pasa después este autor a demostrar que efectivamente España trabajó como ninguna otra nación para procurar esta gloria a la Virgen Inmaculada, en varias páginas dignas de ser leídas por todos los amantes de la verdad, las cuales pasamos aquí en silencio para evitar prolijidad; y por último añade: "Pío IX lo definió, España lo habia preparado."

Pío IX puso a María su corona de Inmaculada; España le había allanado el camino para llegar a sus plantas, para subir hasta sus purísimas sienes...

Para memoria de la gloriosa definición de 1854 el Pontífice quiso levantar en Roma un grandioso monumento. O por reflexión, o por instinto, o por disposición de Dios, Pío IX escogió para erigirlo la Plaza de España, frente al palacio de nuestra Embajada. Y para su solemne bendición, hecha el 8 de Septiembre de 1857, aceptó el palacio mismo, ofrecido por nuestro Embajador.

Desde aquella altísima columna la Inmaculada Virgen parece estar perpetuamente reconociendo y agradeciendo a España, en su representante, sus gloriosos trabajos por la definición y repitiendo las palabras del gran Pontífice en el día de la inauguración del monumento: "que tenía la mayor

complacencia en venir a la Embajada de S. M. C. por haber sido siempre España la nación más devota de la Virgen y la que más fervoroso culto había tributado a la Inmaculada Concepción."[19]

Por último, prescindiendo de otros elocuentísimos testimonios, terminamos esta tarea con lo que sobre tan simpático asunto escribió el célebre P. Alarcón. He aquí sus palabras, dignas de ser meditadas por todos cuantos amen las glorias puras de España: "La nación predestinada por Dios para descubrir un Nuevo Mundo por donde se ensancharan las fronteras del reino de Jesucristo, pareció predestinada también a influir en la Iglesia docente e infalible para que descubriera a los ojos de todos, y todos pudieran contemplar con ojos de fe ese mundo sobrenatural lleno de los hermosos y purísimos resplandores de la divinidad, que se llama María Inmaculada. ¡María fué concebida sin pecado original! ¡María fué llena de gracia en el primer instante de su ser! Eso dicen entre las obscuridades de los primeros siglos, ramificaciones del rito oriental en nuestras liturgias góticas, isidorianas, muzárabes. Como acérrimos defensores de este privilegio de María, hubiéramos presentado en liza, a ser necesario, los Leandros, los Isidoros, los Ildefonsos, como se deduce de sus encomios a la Virgen; y, cuando fué necesario, se presentó todo un ejército de teólogos insignes, desde Juan de Segovia en el concilio de Basilea, hasta Diego Laínez en el concilio de Trento. ¡La carta de San Bernardo a los canónigos de Lyón (o interpolada o mal interpretada) siembra la alarma en los campamentos de la Iglesia militante; la creencia general y pía sentencia empieza a tener impugnadores hasta en nuestro suelo! ¡Ah! Entonces la España, que dió por bien em-

[19] P. L. Frias, en articulo titulado *España por la definición dogmática*. Núm. extr. de Diciembre de *Razón y Fe*, 1904, pág. 97.

pleados más de siete siglos de lucha para reponer a Jesucristo y su Purísima Madre en los dominios que les había usurpado Mahoma, dará del mismo modo por muy bien empleados otros siete que se tardará en lograr que los fieles todos reconozcan como dogma de fe el misterio de la Inmaculada Concepción y todos proclamen a María Reina concebida sin pecado original. Con este fin, entre otros, inspira Dios a un español, el guipuzcoano Iñigo de Loyola, que funde una Compañía, que bien puede llamarse de soldados de la Inmaculada, pues ni uno solo en más de tres siglos ha faltado a la consigna de defenderla. Y que tuviera este fin, se prueba con la afirmación expresa y como recibida de lo alto, hecha por otro español, el Coadjutor segoviano y Santo canonizado Alonso Rodríguez y con los comprobantes de la historia hasta hace medio siglo. Con este fin se elevan en España templos y altares sin cuento, y se instituyen, en honra del misterio, confraternidades y religiosos institutos, como el erigido en Toledo por concesión de Inocencio VIII. Y el Rey de Castilla y León, Fernando III *el Santo,* atribuye a la Inmaculada sus triunfos sobre la morisma y tiene su imagen en los campamentos y hasta la lleva sobre el arzón de la silla. Y Reyes de Aragón y de Navarra son los que esgrimen la espada de la ley para defender el privilegio de María. Y los Reyes Católicos, después de conquistada Granada, cumplen su voto de consagrar un templo a la Purísima, a quien habían encomendado la empresa. Y Carlos V manda grabar la imagen de la Concepción en sus estandartes y en sus escudos. Y su hijo Felipe II cuida de que se erijan iglesias en las Indias occidentales y en el archipiélago filipino bajo el título y al amparo de la Virgen sin mancilla. Y como por entonces ya se dejan sentir más fuertes las coletadas del infernal dragón contra la única mujer que le aplastó la cabeza, y entre el fragor de la lucha

aumentan los deseos de los defensores marianos por lograr la definición dogmática, sus impacientes entusiasmos llegan hasta el solio Pontificio, y Paulo V oye los ruegos de Felipe III, y oye Gregorio XV sus instancias respetuosas, pero apremiantes, hasta el punto de estar dispuesto el mismo Rey a ir a Roma para activar en persona la causa de la Purísima. Y España tiene la gloria, con sus repetidas demandas, de que la Santa Sede prohiba la impugnación de la pía sentencia en público y hasta en privado, y logra las concesiones llenas de esperanzas de Inocencio X y las de Alejandro VII en su magnífica Bula *Sollicitudo*, debida de un modo especial a las gestiones de Felipe IV, intérprete de toda la Real Familia, de los Obispos, de los Cabildos, el Clero, las Universidades y el pueblo todo; Bula por la que (según carta autógrafa del Papa al Rey) esperaba Su Santidad que *volveria la paz a las consciencias;* Bula que, según palabras del mismo Alejandro VII, había tenido durante cuatro meses al pie de su crucifijo y el dia de la Inmaculada en el altar bajo los corporales, como impetrando del Señor el acierto y una bendición especial por amor de su Santísima Madre. España, por Doña Mariana de Austria, prosigue en Roma los intentos de su esposo, y llegado a su mayor edad Carlos II, no desmiente la devoción de sus predecesores y eleva nuevos ruegos al Papa.

Y Felipe V prosigue cerca de Clemente XII en la misma demanda, tradicional en la corte de España. Y Carlos III crea una Orden de Caballeros para honrar el misterio de la Inmaculada, y logra de Clemente XIII que sea declarada Maria Santísima, en el misterio de su Concepción, Patrona de España y de sus Indias.

Y Alcalá, Barcelona, Cervera, Santiago, Granada, Valencia, Lérida, Salamanca, Valladolid, Sevilla, Zaragoza, Toledo y Oviedo, en sus Universidades, de gloriosísimos fastos,

presencian con júbilo cómo no sólo defienden sus doctores la creencia en la Inmaculada, sino que no se admite en la colación de los grados universitarios a los que voluntariamente no se obliguen, y hasta con juramento, a defender tan dulcísimo misterio. Y no hubo en esto un asomo de violencia. La violencia hubiera estado en reprimir las explosiones del intenso amor a la Virgen incomparable, cuya inmaculada pureza se proclamaba en las salutaciones de unos a otros y se esculpía como una profesión de fe en los umbrales de nuestras casas; cuyas alabanzas resonaban en todos nuestros púlpitos, y al compás de las coplas de Miguel Cid se cantaban en todas nuestras calles y plazas; cuya imagen, que es el embeleso de los ángeles en el cielo, intentaron trasladar a la tierra con su cincel Fernández Montañés, y con sus pinceles Murillo; y cuyos loores cantaron con singular unción nuestros poetas, desde Prudencio hasta Calderón de la Barca.

Estas corrientes de devoción, represadas antes a intervalos durante la reconquista, y después en más cercanas épocas por las perturbaciones y guerras que ensangrentaron el suelo de nuestra patria, no habían disminuído, no; antes la misma represa, que les obligaba a no extenderse tanto, hacía que ahondasen y se acumulasen más. He aquí porqué tuvo Pío IX el consuelo de confirmarse en el concepto que siempre habia tenido de nuestra devoción predilecta, cuando aun antes de volver a Roma y una vez asentado de nuevo en su Sede, empezó a recibir, junto con las de todos los Obispos del mundo, las entusiastas y sapientísimas y consoladoras respuestas de nuestros Prelados de la Península y de la América española, en las que le manifestaban las ansias de todas sus diócesis porque llegara el día de la definición dogmática, que hace medio siglo regocijó al mundo cristiano.

He ahí porqué la España católica, la España de los concilios de Toledo, de Covadonga y de Bailén, recibió con

transportes de júbilo la buena nueva, deseada hacía tantos siglos, y por cuyo logro había trabajado como ninguna otra nación del mundo. Mas, ¡ay, en qué situación llegaba! Juzgando humanamente, llegaba fuera de tiempo; pero mirando muy de alto, no podía llegar a mejor tiempo para todo el mundo, pero especialmente para España."[20]

Bien quisiéramos ahora compendiar algo siquiera de lo que escribió el no menos elocuente P. Aicardo sobre la *Inspiración Concepcionista en los Autos Sacramentales de Calderón:* en este preciosísimo trabajo prodríamos admirar, entrelazadas con las maravillas poéticas del gran poeta español, las sentencias más sorprendentes de la Patrística, las bellezas de la literatura y del arte, y sobre todo las glorias más puras de la España católica; y todo ello lo podemos saborear en este escrito, que parece dictado, más que por el estudio profundo de nuestra historia, incomparable, por el espíritu purísimo de la fe divina, elemento principal de aquella grandeza que hoy, en esta época de triste decadencia, ni aun somos capaces de contemplar, sepultados como estamos en la más cobarde abyección. Esos vivos reflejos de luz divina que a España hicieron en otro tiempo la nación más católica entre todas, partían del corazón de la Inmaculada, la cual de este modo correspondía al singular placer con que todo este reino cifró su dicha en la proclamación de las excelencias de la Madre de Dios; pero nos vemos obligados a desistir de recoger estas preciosas margaritas, contentándonos con remitir a nuestros lectores a tan hermoso trabajo por no alargar demasiado estos ligeros apuntes.[22]

[20] Núm. extr. de *Razón y Fe*, ya citado, págs. 181-18.
[22] Ibid., págs. 113-148.

GROTTO OF LOURDES

F. De Henwood—Crypt of National Shrine

CHAPTER XIV

BISHOP MALOU OF BRUGES: THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

L'Eglise catholique respirait à peine au milieu des bouleversements politiques et des persécutions dont elle avait été une des premières victimes à la fin du XVIII[e] siècle, lorsque le mouvement en faveur de la définition de l'Immaculée Conception se manifesta de nouveau.

Ce fut sans aucun doute pour accélérer le moment de cette sentence définitive, que les Pères Franciscains du royaume de Naples sollicitèrent du Saint-Siége la permission de célébrer l'Immaculée Conception de la sainte Vierge dans la préface de la Messe, chose qui jusqu'alors était inouïe. Pie VII accéda à leurs désirs le 17 mai 1806.

En 1822, le R. P. Rivarola, bénédictin de Sicile, publia un opuscule fort remarquable sur la vérité du mystère. Par des considérations ingénieuses tirées des lois de la nature et des relations physiques qui existent entre les parents et leurs enfants il tâcha de prouver que la sainte Vierge a dû nécessairement échapper à la contagion commune pour que son Fils en pût être préservé (80). Quoique toutes ses preuves ne soient point concluantes, son travail a un caractère d'originalité bien rare, et il contribua certainement pour une bonne part à encourager les pieux serviteurs de Marie dans leurs espérances.

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[80] *Dissertatione, in cui si prova che Maria Vergine sia stata necessariamente Concepita Immacolata, per necessaria conseguenza dell'infallibile dogma della divina sua Maternità* Dall'abate Cassinese D. Gaspare Rivarola, 8°. Palermo, 1822. *Pareri*, v. 1.

Peu de temps après cette publication, la faveur accordée par Pie VII aux Pères Franciscains de Naples excita la sainte ambition de l'archevêque de Séville : il sollicita à son tour du Saint-Siège pour son diocèse, et obtint la même faveur par un rescrit du 6 septembre 1834. L'archevêque administrateur du diocèse de Lyon, où le culte de l'Immaculée Conception est en vigueur depuis le temps de saint Bernard, s'empressa d'imiter cet exemple, qui fut suivi presque aussitôt par un grand nombre d'évêques et d'ordres religieux, dans toutes les parties du monde. Mon vénérable prédécesseur obtint cette concession le 10 janvier 1840, pour le diocèse de Bruges. Mgr l'évêque de Gand l'avait obtenue le 20 septembre 1839. L'ordre de Saint-Dominique, s'associant enfin à la croyance commune, fut autorisé, à sa demande, par décret du 10 décembre 1843, à célébrer aussi dans la préface de la Messe la grande prérogative de la Mère de Dieu (81).

Une autre dévotion vint, vers la même époque, donner un nouvel élan à la piété des fidèles envers la Vierge Immaculée. On n'avait point encore fait mention du mystère dans les Litanies de Lorette, qui rappellent si bien les autres prérogatives de la Mère de Dieu. Charles III, roi de Naples, avait sollicité de Benoît XIV, comme nous l'avons vu plus haut, la faculté d'ajouter aux Litanies cette invocation : *Mère Immaculée, priez pour nous.* Mais cette demande n'avait pas eu de suite. Le 20 septembre 1839, la congrégation des Rites accorda, par deux rescrits, à Mgr l'évêque de Forli et à Mgr l'évêque de Gand, la permission d'ajouter aux Litanies de Lorette cette belle invocation : *Reine conçue sans péché, priez*

[81] *Voy.* P. Perrone, *De Imm. B. V. Mariæ Conceptu,* etc., p. 248 ed. Rom. 1847.

pour nous. En peu de temps cette pratique est devenue générale (82).

Cette extension du culte de la Vierge Immaculée, si ostensiblement encouragé par le Saint-Siége, réveilla les anciennes espérances et provoqua de nouvelles démarches de la part de l'épiscopat, dans le but d'obtenir la définition dogmatique du mystère. Nous avons déjà vu que S. S. Grégoire XVI, du 10 mai au 30 novembre 1840, reçut les suppliques de cinquante-deux cardinaux, archevêques et évêques qui insistaient sur l'utilité et la nécessité morale de prononcer le jugement définitif (83). Peu de temps après, il reçut encore une quarantaine de demandes semblables qui venaient des missions asiatiques, de l'Amérique méridionale, de l'Espagne, de l'Italie, de la Savoie, de la Moravie et de la Bohême (84).

Sa Sainteté Pie IX reçut, avant le 2 février 1849, quarante demandes des évêques du royaume de Naples, avec une nouvelle instance de Sa Majesté le roi des Deux-Siciles; dix demandes des archevêques et évêques de France, quatre-vingts demandes des archevêques et évêques de toutes les parties du monde (85), sans compter les suppliques des ordres religieux, des chapitres et des églises particulières; ce qui fait en tout cent et trente demandes de l'épiscopat adressées à Sa Sainteté dans l'espace de deux ans et demi, et deux cent vingt demandes d'évêques dans le courant de ce siècle, si on tient compte de celles qui furent adressées à Sa Sainteté Grégoire XVI, à dater de l'année 1840.

Dans ce chiffre ne figurent point les demandes indirectes des évêques qui ont sollicité les facultés de célébrer l'Imma-

[82] *Voy. P. Perrone,* loc. cit. p. 242.
[83] *Pareri,* IX, au commencement.
[84] *Pareri,* IX, p. 19 et seq.
[85] *Pareri,* IX, 87 et seq.

culée Conception dans la sainte Messe et dans les Litanies de Lorette.

Je laisse à juger quelle impression dut faire sur un Pontife aussi dévoué à la Mère de Dieu que Pie IX, une manifestation aussi unanime et aussi imposante de l'épiscopat catholique. Le Saint-Siége ne pouvait y demeurer indifférent. Que dis-je? Il avait pour ainsi dire encouragé ces efforts. En 1843, le cardinal Lambruschini, un des dignitaires les plus élevés de la cour romaine, avait publié à Rome, aux applaudissements du Saint-Père et de toute la prélature, une dissertation dans laquelle il s'efforça de prouver que l'Immaculée Conception de Marie pouvait être définie par le Saint-Siége, et qu'on pouvait sans témérité espérer plus que jamais ce jugement solennel (86).

Cette dissertation fut traduite dans toutes les langues de l'Europe, et lue partout. La position de l'auteur, ancien archevêque de Gênes, ancien nonce à Paris, enfin secrétaire d'Etat de Sa Sainteté, donnait à cet opuscule une immense portée. Aussi voit-on que beaucoup d'évêques, dans leur réponse à l'encyclique de Sa Sainteté Pie IX, invoquent l'autorité de cet écrit, et celle du livre du R. P. Perrone, qui parut en 1847 (87).

Ce savant religieux avait résumé les preuves du mystère, dans le but unique d'en démontrer la *définibilité*. Son travail fut lu avec la plus grande avidité, et contribua sans aucun doute à accélérer le moment de la définition dogmatique.

Lorsque cet intéressant ouvrage parut, Sa Sainteté Pie IX avait déjà conçu le projet d'interroger tous les évêques du

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[86] *Sull' Immacolato Concepimento di Maria, dissertazione polemica* del cardinale Luigi Lambruschini, vescovo di Sabina, etc. 8°, Roma, 1843. *Pareri*, v.

[87] *De Immaculato B. V. Mariæ Conceptu, an dogmatico decreto definiri possit, disquisitio theologica*, Joannis Perrone, e S. J. etc. 8°. Romæ, 1847.

monde catholique, afin de réunir ce concile œcuménique dont le bienheureux Léonard de Port-Maurice, à l'instigation d'un pieux cardinal, avait donné l'idée. Le Saint-Père déclare, dans la bulle *Ineffabilis,* que dès les premiers jours de son pontificat il avait été préoccupé de cette grave affaire. En effet, dans le courant de 1847 ou au commencement de 1848, il avait nommé une commission de consulteurs, choisis parmi les prélats et les théologiens les plus distingués de l'Eglise romaine, et il leur avait soumis la question de savoir si la pieuse croyance à l'Immaculée Conception pouvait, d'après les usages de l'Eglise catholique, être solennellement définie. A la fin de 1848, le Saint-Père, pour échapper aux étreintes de la révolution, dut quitter la ville de Rome et se réfugier à Gaëte. Il fit continuer les travaux de cette commission sur la terre de l'exil. A plusieurs reprises il réunit les cardinaux exilés comme lui, et prit leur avis sur le projet de définir la prérogative de la Mère de Dieu. Ce fut de Gaëte qu'il adressa, le 2 février 1849, à tous les évêques du monde, la célèbre encyclique par laquelle il les invita à adresser au ciel les plus ferventes prières, afin qu'il éclairât le chef de l'Eglise sur cette importante affaire, leur demandant en même temps quelle était, au sujet de l'Immaculée Conception de la sainte Vierge, la croyance de leur troupeau et leur croyance personnelle.

Le Saint-Père voulait constater le consentement unanime de toute l'Eglise. Son but n'était point de provoquer de nouvelles démonstrations du mystère; cependant un grand nombre de prélats motivèrent si bien leur foi, exposèrent avec tant de profondeur et d'érudition les preuves de la pieuse croyance, que les réponses de l'épiscopat renferment, dans leur ensemble, une démonstration complète et irréfuta-

ble du mystère. Il est impossible de les lire, sans concevoir la plus haute idée de la science et de la piété de l'épiscopat catholique; sans admirer son attachement au Saint-Siége et son dévouement à la cause de la Mère de Dieu. L'unanimité des évêques est aussi une chose des plus remarquables. Sur environ sept cent cinquante cardinaux, patriarches, archevêques, évêques et vicaires apostoliques que l'Eglise compte dans son sein, plus de six cents avaient répondu au Saint-Père avant que celui-ci prononçât la définition. Si l'on tient compte des oublis, des cas de maladie, de mort, de vacance de siége, de lettres égarées à cause des grandes distances, on peut dire que l'épiscopat catholique tout entier a répondu à l'encyclique du 2 février 1849, et manifesté ainsi le vif intérêt qu'il prenait à l'affaire de la définition.

A côté du mouvement de l'épiscopat et des fidèles que nous venons de signaler, se produisait aussi le mouvement des théologiens et des docteurs qui consacraient leur plume à la gloire de Marie, et qui préparaient à leur manière le grand événement du 8 décembre 1854.

Nous avons déjà indiqué la belle dissertation que le R. P. Rivarola publia en 1822, la dissertation du cardinal Lambruschini qui vit le jour en 1843, et le traité sur la définibilité du mystère que le R. P. Perrone donna en 1847: en remontant un peu plus haut, nous voyons qu'en 1839, le R. P. Marien Spada, de l'ordre de Saint-Dominique, mit au jour à Naples une dissertation destinée à expliquer la pensée de saint Thomas d'Aquin sur le mystère de l'Immaculée Conception. C'est une des discussions les plus solides et les plus raisonnables que j'ai lues sur ce sujet. Une foule de difficultés disparaissent, des objections que l'on croyait insolubles sont résolues à l'aide de rapprochements ingénieux et de réponses

habiles. Le Père Spada qui désire ranger le Docteur angélique parmi les défenseurs de l'Immaculée Conception, eût gagné sa cause si elle avait pu être gagnée. Pour moi, je reste convaincu comme je le dirai dans le chapitre suivant, que certaines doctrines de saint Thomas n'admettent aucune explication; mais je ferai voir que le saint Docteur paraît aussi, dans certains passages de ses œuvres, avoir professé la pieuse croyance; qu'en tout cas son opinion, vu les circonstances où elle se produisit, ne porte aucun préjudice à la prérogative de Marie. Au Père Spada reste le mérite d'avoir discuté cette question en excellent théologien et en courageux défenseur de l'Immaculée Conception (88).

En 1848, au milieu des commotions révolutionnaires, le R. P. Biancheri, prêtre de la Mission, écrivait à Tivoli un long traité sur le mystère. Il résuma les principaux arguments que l'on apporte en faveur de la pieuse croyance et les objections les plus spécieuses qu'on y oppose. Il examina surtout si la définition dogmatique était opportune et quelle forme il convenait de lui donner. Il opina en faveur d'une définition qui déclarât Marie exempte de la dette même du péché originel. Malgré quelques légers défauts auxquels nulle œuvre humaine n'échappe, ce travail est un des meilleurs qui aient été publiés sur la matière (89).

Le R. P. Bigoni qui, en 1854, résidait à Padoue, où j'eus l'honneur de le voir, dans le magnifique couvent de Saint-Antoine, après avoir exercé les fonctions de général des

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[88] *Esame critico sulla dottrina dell' Angelico dottore S. Tommaso di Aquino, circa il peccato originale relativamente alla Beatissima Vergine Maria*, del P. M. Fr. Mariano Spada, de'Predicatori, gia reggente del Collegio della Minerva in Roma. Napoli, 1839. *Pareri*, v, 181.

[89] *Voto in forma di dissertazione sulla definizione dogmatica dell' Immacolato Concepimento della B. V. M.* del P. Pietro Biancheri, prete della Congreg. della Missione. Tivoli, 1848, et *Pareri*, v, 181.

Pères Conventuels, consacra ses loisirs à la défense de l'Immaculée Conception. La seconde édition de son excellent opuscule parut à Venise en 1849 (90).

Dès que l'encyclique du 2 février 1849 parvint dans l'Amérique méridionale, où la pieuse croyance était aussi vive qu'en Espagne, elle y excita un grand enthousiasme et donna lieu à plusieurs publications remarquables. J'ai sous les yeux d'abord une savante dissertation de l'abbé Joseph Maria Diez de Sollano, docteur et professeur de théologie à l'université de Mexico; dissertation qui fut composée sur les ordres de cette université, et offerte par elle à Sa Sainteté Pie IX comme sa réponse à l'encyclique du Saint-Père (91). Ce travail sobre et solide fait grand honneur à cette corporation catholique et savante.

Le chapitre et l'université de Guadalajara, non contents de motiver leur profession de foi au mystère de l'Immaculée Conception, adressèrent au Saint-Père de précieux documents relatifs au culte de la Vierge Immaculée dans ce pays, et insistèrent vivement sur l'opportunité de la définition (92).

Une Thèse publique en faveur de l'Immaculée Conception fut soutenue et imprimée à Rio Janeiro, en 1850, par M. Honoré de Silva dos Santos Pereira (93). Le Brésil se prononçait donc aussi pour la définition du mystère.

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[90] *In lode di Maria Sanctissima senza macchia concetta, disscrtazione panegirica* del *P. Angelo Bigoni, ex ministro generale* de' Minori Conventuali. Seconda edizione. Venezia, 1849.

[91] *Theologica de Immaculata Conceptione B. V. M. dissertatio,* auct. Josepho Maria Diez de Sollano, in alma Mexicana universitate doct. theol. etc., ejusdem universitatis jussu elucubrata . . . unaque cum prædicta universitate SS. D. N. Pio PP. IX . . . pie reverenterque dicata. Mexici, 1849. *Pareri,* v, 217.

[92] *Dictamen sobre la Immaculada Concepcion de Maria santisima.* Guadalajara, 1849. *Pareri,* VIII, 345.—*Dictamen de la universidad literaria de Guadalajara sobre la Concepcion Immaculada de Maria santisima.—Pareri,* VIII, 440.

[93] *These em que se sustenta e prova con toda a evidencia a pureza da Immaculada conceiçao de Maria santissima por seu mui fervoroso e crente devoto* Fidelis Honoria da Silva dos santos Pereira, natural do Rio de Janeiro. Rio de Janeiro, 1850, et *Pareri,* VII, 565.

Le chapitre de Durango choisit pour interprète de ses sentiments envers la Vierge Immaculée, le docteur Joseph Rafaël Aguila, qui lui offrit son travail le 25 mars 1850. Son opuscule fut offert ensuite au Saint-Siège comme un hommage au privilége de l'Immaculée Conception (94).

Son Eminence le cardinal De Romo, archevêque de Séville, dédia, la même année, à Sa Majesté Catholique un discours dans lequel il confirmait la croyance à l'Immaculée Conception. Ce discours fut une nouvelle manifestation du désir général de la nation espagnole (95).

En Italie le même mouvement existait. Un ecclésiastique de l'Oratoire de Venise publia, en 1849, une dissertation dans laquelle il tâcha de prouver que la Mère de Dieu n'a jamais contracté la dette du péché originel (96). Nous avons fait remarquer ailleurs qu'il n'était point nécessaire de soutenir cette thèse. Cette publication fournit du reste une preuve nouvelle de l'attention qu'attirait partout la question de l'Immaculée Conception de la Mère de Dieu.

En 1850, l'abbé Pierre Bigaro, prêtre de Venise, publia, dans sa ville natale, une excellente dissertation sur la prophétie de la Genèse (97). Nous avons eu l'occasion de la louer ailleurs.

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[94] *Dictamen sobre el mysterio de la Immaculada Concepcion de Maria santisima, presentado,* por el Dr. Jose Rafael Aguila al M. J. Y. V. Cabildo ecclesiastico, en 25 Marzo de 1850. Durango. *Pareri,* VIII, 299.

[95] *Discurso sobre la Immaculada Concepcion de Maria, dedicado a S. M. la Reina D. Isabella II,* por el cardenal de Romo, arzobispo de Sevilla. Sevilla, 1850. *Pareri,* VIII, 131.

[96] *Dissertazione di un prete della Congregazione dell' Oratorio di Venezia, nella quale, ritenutosi che Maria SS. sia stata preservata dall'atto d'incorrere nella colpa d'origine nel primo instante della infusione dell'anima sua nel suo corpo, studiasi di mostrare che sia stata preservata altresì da ogni debito di incontrarla.* Venezia. Typ. armena 1849, et *Pareri,* V, 663.

[97] *Purissimæ Virginis Mariæ Dei Genitricis Conceptus quomodo Immaculatus biblico* του Προιεαγγελιου *testimonio statuendus? Brevis disquisitio theologico-critica,* presbyteri Veneti Petri Bigaro. Venet, 1850, et *Pareri,* VII, 81.

Les pages que l'abbé Gaëtan Martorelli, archidiacre d'Osimo, écrivit la même année sur l'opportunité de la définition, ont aussi un grand mérite. Les motifs que le savant auteur allègue à l'appui de sa thèse sont solides, vrais et judicieux (98).

De tous les écrits, publiés en 1850 sur le mystère de l'Immaculée Conception, le plus remarquable sans contredit est le *Mémoire* de Dom Guéranger abbé de Solesmes. Ce petit volume, plein de sens et de raison, a le caractère d'un écrit original. L'auteur a su s'approprier les arguments anciens de telle sorte qu'ils paraissent nouveaux sous sa plume. Il a fait justice aussi, et d'une manière triomphante, des difficultés que l'on soulevait alors et contre le mystère même et contre sa définibilité (99).

En 1851, le chanoine Cerri de Turin composa un *Manuel des douze fondements* ou motifs *qui assurent le triomphe de la sainte Vierge sur le péché originel;* ouvrage d'érudition, écrit avec jugement (1), qui eut pour écho à Turin un autre opuscule de même nature, quoique plus faible (2).

A Rome les éditeurs des *Pareri dei vescovi* firent traduire en Italien la dissertation que M. Augustin Opitz, archidiacre dans le diocèse de Breslau, avait écrite en faveur de l'Immaculée Conception; ils l'insérèrent, en 1851, dans leur précieuse collection (3).

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[98] *Dissertazione de D. Gaetano Martorelli archidiacono della cattedrale di Osimo, sull'opportunità dell tempo di dichiarar dogma di fede l'Immaculato Concepimento di Maria SS.* Recanati, 1850, et *Pareri*, v, 721.

[99] *Mémoire sur la question de l'Immaculée Conception de la très-sainte Vierge,* par le R. P. Dom Prosper Guéranger, abbé de Solesmes. Paris, 1850. *Pareri,* VI.

[1] *Enchiridion super duodecim momenta fundatum, ex quibus exsurgit triumphus B. Mariæ Virginis Dei in originale peccatum,* auctore can. hon. Dominico Cerri, theol. jurisque can. profes. emerito. Taurini, 1851, et *Pareri,* VI, 1.

[2] *Ragionamento dedicato all' Immacolata Concezione di Maria Vergine.* Torino, 1851, et *Pareri,* V, 735.

[3] *Dissertazione dell'arciprete Agostino Opitz, nella diocesi di Vratislavia* (écrite en allemand en 1851, et traduite en italien) *Pareri,* V, 769.

L'année suivante vit naître quatre ouvrages sur le même sujet. Le premier était dû à la plume du Père Pierre Gual, gardien du collége de la Propagation de la foi, à Ocopa dans l'Amérique Méridionale. Le Père Marcellin de Civezza, professeur d'éloquence sacrée au couvent d'*Ara cœli,* à Rome, le traduisit de l'espagnol en italien, et le fit imprimer dans la ville sainte. Il tend à prouver la possibilité et l'opportunité de la définition (4).

Le second ouvrage a été mis au jour par le R. P. Antoine de Regnano, sous le nom de *Panégyrique de l'Immaculée Conception.* Il est plus pratique que théorique. La troisième édition fut publiée à Prato en 1852. Nous l'avons reçue des mains du savant auteur, qui a fait partie de la Congrégation des Consulteurs instituée par S. S. Pie IX (5).

Un pieux chanoine de Narni, M. Martinez, prêtre d'origine espagnole et professeur de théologie au séminaire de sa patrie adoptive, a publié, en 1852 et dans les deux années suivantes, cinq volumes assez considérables sur le privilége de la sainte Vierge. Il y a déployé plus de zèle que de profondeur (6). Le traité qu'il a ajouté sur la possibilité et l'utilité de la définition, renferme quelques documents utiles (7).

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[4] *Della definibilità della Concezione Immacolata di Maria, dissertazione theologica* del P. Pietro Gual M. O. attuale Guadiano del collegio di Propaganna fede in Ocopa; volgarizzamento dalla spagnuolo del P. Marcellino da Civezza, M. O. prof. di eloq. sacr. in Aracæli. Roma, 1852. *Pareri,* VIII, 1.

[5] *Novenario e panegirico della Immacolata Concezione di Maria Vergine* del P. Antonio da Regnano M. O. terza ed. Prato, 1852.

[6] *De natura et gratia admirabilis et purissimæ Conceptionis Deiparæ V. Mariæ, elucidationes polemicæ ad dogmaticum proxime ferendam sententiam utiliter congestæ,* . . . auct. sacerdote Hispano D. Raymundo Martinez et Fabrer, cathed. Narnien canon. atque in ven. seminario dogm. et mor. theol. moderator. 5 vol. in 8. Interamnæ, 1852-1824.

[7] *De utilitate et ratione sufficienti ad dogmaticam definitionem super Immaculato Deiparæ Mariæ Conceptu . . . elucidatio sacra,* auct. sac. Hispano Raym. Martinez et Fabrer, etc. Interamnæ, 1853.

A la même époque, un pieux religieux de Naples publiait un traité fort étendu sur l'Immaculée Conception. Sa Majesté le roi des Deux-Siciles fit les frais de cet écrit qu'il répandit généreusement dans son royaume et à l'étranger (8).

J'ai loué ailleurs, comme elle le mérite, la réponse substantielle que Mgr Bruni, évêque d'Ugento, fit aux objections que l'on soulevait contre la définition de l'Immaculée Conception (9). Il suffit de la rappeler ici.

Peu d'écrits ont fait autant de sensation en Europe que les articles des rédacteurs de la *Civiltà cattolica,* sur *les convenances sociales de la définition de l'Immaculée Conception de la bienheureuse Vierge Marie,* articles que je citerai à la fin de ce chapitre, comme démontrant d'une manière convaincante l'opportunité de la définition, en égard aux erreurs qui règnent de nos jours (10).

Mais de tous les écrits qui ont paru avant la définition, il n'en est aucun qui, par son étendue, son importance et sa solidité, puisse être comparé au grand travail du R. P. Passaglia dont j'ai été souvent tributaire dans le cours de cet ouvrage, et dont j'ai déjà fait voir ailleurs la grande valeur (11).

Le R. P. Ballerini, confrère du R. P. Passaglia, en pub-

[8] *Della origine, progressi e stato presente del culto e festa dell'Immacolatissimo e santissimo Concepimento della grande Genitrice di Dio Maria, e della sua dogmatica definizione, Ricerche storico-chronologico-critiche* per F. Agostino Pacifico di Maria addolorata, Alcantarino. Napoli, 1852.

[9] *Breve riposta alle principali obbiezioni che si oppongono alla definizione dogmatica del mistero dell' Immacolata Concezione di Maria santissima,* per Mgr Bruni, vescovo di Ugento. Roma, 1853.

[10] *Congruenze sociale di una definizione dogmatica sull'Immacolato Concepimento della B. V. M. Voy. Pareri,* v, 1.

[11] *De Immaculato Deiparæ semper Virginis Conceptu, Caroli Passaglia,* etc., S. J. *Commentarius.* Pars 1. 4°. Romæ, 1854. Le second volume parut peu de temps avant la définition, et le troisième dans le courant de 1855. La Bulle de définition a été calquée sur cet ouvrage.

liant un recueil de monuments inédits ou rares, pour prouver le mystère, a contribué pour sa part à éclairer les esprits. Il faut dire cependant que son ouvrage a paru peu de jours avant la définition de l'Immaculée Conception (12).

Ces nombreuses publications étaient autant de manifestations de la croyance générale.

Sa Sainteté voulut qu'elles fussent reproduites à la suite des réponses des évêques, comme des documents contemporains de la grande cause qu'il allait juger. C'est ainsi que le curieux recueil des *Pareri* que nous avons cité si souvent, atteignit le nombre de dix volumes (13). Au fur et à mesure

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[12] *Sylloge monumentorum ad mysterium Conceptionis Immaculatæ Virginis Deiparæ illustrandum,* cura et industria Antonii Ballerini, S. J. Pars 1. Romæ, 1854. Cette première partie forme le dixième volume des *Pareri.* Le second volume a été imprimé à part dans l'imprimerie de la Propagande à Rome, en 1856.

[13] Voici l'ordre dans lequel ce recueil fut publié: *Pareri sulla definizione dogmatica dell' Immacolato Concepimento della B. Vergine Maria, rasseguati alla Sanità di Pio IX. P. M. in occasione della sua enciclica, data da Gaëta, il 2 Febrajo* 1849, Parte I, vol. I, p. VII.—535. Roma 1851. Parte I, vol. II, p. 505. Roma 1851.—Parte I, vol. III, p. 456. On trouve p. 422: *Primo indice generale alfabetico delle sede arcivescovili e vescovili de'cui respettivi titolari si contengono le lettere in questa prima parte dei* PARERI. Roma 1851.—Parte II, vol. IV, p. 309. Roma 1851. Ce volume contient les adresses des chapitres, des ordres religieux et des simples fidèles.—Parte III, vol. V, p. XXVI, 792. Ce volume contient divers opuscules sur l'Immaculée Conception. Roma 1851.—Parte III, vol. VI, p. 662. Opuscules et extraits de conciles provinciaux. Roma 1852.—Parte III, vol. VII, p. 343. CXL. Roma 1852. Instructions pastorales et supplément aux réponses des évêques. —Parte III, vol. VIII, p. 604. Roma 1852. Opuscules, instructions pastorales, documents.—Parte III, vol. IX, p. 362. Roma 1852. Ce volume contient un supplément aux réponses des évêques, et p. 321: *Indice generale delle materie contenute nei nove volumi de'*PARERI. C'est la table alphabétique de toutes les réponses des évêques publiées dans le recueil.—*Appendice al* vol. IX, p. 85. Roma 1854. Supplément aux réponses des évêques.—*Appendice* II, al vol. IX, p. 399. Roma 1854. Supplément aux réponses des évêques et opuscules.—Parte IV, vol. X, p. X, 560. Gr. Lat. Roma 1854. Ce volume contient la 1re partie de la *Sylloge monumentorum* du R. P. Ant. Ballerini, dont la seconde partie p. LXXXVII, 881. Grec. Lat. in Roma 1856, a été publiée en dehors de la collection des *Pareri.*—*Monumenta de dogmatica definitione Immaculati Conceptus Virginis Deiparæ* pag. 27. C'est l'allocution prononcée dans le consistoire du 1er décembre 1854 et la Bulle de définition. Le premier appendix du IXe vol. et le Xe vol. été publiés peu de temps avant la réunion des évêques, et le second supplément du IXe volume, pendant le séjour des évêques, Rome.

qu'il était imprimé, on le communiquait aux théologiens consulteurs; et lorsqu'il fut achevé, Sa Sainteté en fit remettre un exemplaire complet à tous les évêques présents à Rome lors de la solennité de la définition.

Les théologiens consulteurs avaient dans l'entretemps repris leurs travaux: chacun d'eux venait d'expliquer son opinion par écrit. Le Saint-Père fit imprimer ces avis en trois volumes distincts, afin de les soumettre au plus sérieux examen. Puis il nomma une commission spéciale, qui se réunit plusieurs fois dans le courant des années 1852 et 1853, sous la présidence du cardinal Fornari, qui prenait cette affaire à cœur, et qui était, à cause de son profond savoir et de sa longue expérience, l'un des hommes les plus capables de la juger. Cette commission avait été choisie dans celle des vingt consulteurs. Elle se composait de Mgr Caterini, aujourd'hui cardinal; du chanoine Audisio, des révérends Pères Jean Perrone, Charles Passaglia, Clément Schrader de la compagnie de Jésus, du R. P. Marien Spada, de l'ordre des Prédicateurs, de feu le R. P. Tonini, conventuel, auquel fut substitué le Père Ange Trullet, du même ordre.

Cette commission spéciale rédigea avec le plus grand soin le procès-verbal de ses séances, sous le titre de *Court exposé des actes de la commission spéciale nommée par Sa Sainteté Pie IX, pour examiner le sujet de l'Immaculée Conception de la très-sainte Vierge Marie* (14).

Dans sa première réunion du 8 mai 1852 elle fixa l'ordre de ses travaux, et les règles qu'elle voulait suivre pour apprécier sainement les monuments de la tradition catholique. Elle avait reçu la mission de réunir les témoignages décisifs

[14] *Breve espozione degli atti della commissione speciale stabilita della Sancta di N. S. sull'argumento dell'Immacolata Concezione di Maria santissima*, pag. 72, in fol. Roma, 1855.

de cette tradition et de les peser, afin de voir s'ils étaient tels que le Saint-Siége pût, sans déroger aux usages de l'Eglise, définir la croyance à l'immaculée Conception, comme dogme de foi; elle devait constater aussi que cette définition était opportune.

La maturité avec laquelle l'Eglise catholique procède, je ne dis point dans les matières obscures et controversées, lorsqu'il s'agit d'interposer son autorité souveraine, mais dans les questions déjà éclaircies et certaines, brille du plus vif éclat dans la marche que la commission spéciale suivit en ses importants travaux.

Avant tout examen, cette docte assemblée établit d'un commun accord les principes suivants, que l'on peut considérer comme un modèle de critique en matière de théologie:

1° Pour qu'une doctrine puisse être définie, il n'est pas nécessaire que les opinions n'aient jamais varié à son égard dans l'Eglise, que les fidèles et les maîtres de la foi aient toujours été d'accord.

A l'appui de ce principe on cita des exemples nombreux.

2° Il n'est point nécessaire qu'on ne puisse alléguer aucun passage de l'Ecriture, en apparence contraire à cette doctrine.

On confirma ce principe par un grand nombre de faits.

3° Il n'est point nécessaire qu'on puisse alléguer en faveur de cette doctrine des témoignages explicites ou implicites de l'Ecriture sainte. Une doctrine peut être définie sur l'autorité de la tradition seule, sans le témoignage de l'Ecriture.

4° Il n'est pas nécessaire, pour constater la tradition, qu'on produise une série non interrompue de témoignages des Pères, série qui remonterait aux apôtres pour descendre jusqu'à nous.

Ceux qui soutiennent le contraire, s'appuyent sur plusieurs

fausses hypothèses que voici: ils supposent 1° que toute la doctrine enseignée par l'Eglise a été écrite par les Pères; 2° que tous les monuments écrits de la tradition sont parvenus jusqu'à nous; 3° que l'objet de la foi catholique a toujours été distinctement compris et formellement exprimé tout entier; 4° que la tradition d'une époque peut être en désaccord avec la tradition d'une autre époque précédente; 5° que de la doctrine généralement enseignée dans un siècle, on ne peut pas conclure que cette doctrine a toujours été crue, au moins implicitement. Or toutes ces fausses hypothèses étant insoutenables, il faut avouer que la tradition catholique est prouvée lorsqu'on peut constater l'assentiment général de l'Eglise, à une époque quelconque, ou produire un certain nombre de témoignages décisifs qui le supposent. Les conciles œcuméniques ont toujours pensé ainsi; car ils ont souvent allégué en faveur de la foi le témoignage de Pères qui étaient morts depuis peu.

Après avoir établi ces règles *négatives*, qui écartent une foule d'objections créées par l'ignorance et le demi-savoir, la commission spéciale détermina aussi les caractères *positifs* auxquels on reconnaît une doctrine susceptible d'être définie.

Le premier caractère est celui-ci: Que l'on produise quelques témoignages solennels, décisifs, qui renferment la doctrine à définir. Ce principe, justifié par les définitions des conciles œcuméniques et les bulles des Souverains Pontifes, fut admis sans contestation par tous les membres de la commission.

Le second caractère: Que l'on puisse indiquer un ou plusieurs principes révélés qui renferment la doctrine à définir. Ce caractère suppose l'autorité décisive de la tradition médiate, implicite.

Le troisième caractère: Qu'on ne puisse nier cette doctrine sans renverser, ou taxer de fausseté un ou plusieurs articles de foi certains. La connexité des dogmes, l'analogie de la foi ne permettent aucun doute sur la vérité de ce principe.

Le quatrième caractère: L'accord actuel de l'épiscopat catholique.

Le cinquième caractère: La pratique de l'Eglise. Il s'agit ici de pratiques religieuses, universelles, solennelles et commandées: car ces pratiques supposent une vérité théorique. Il faut examiner de plus si cette vérité appartient aux matières de foi, et si l'Eglise la croit révélée.

Après avoir adopté ces règles, la commission spéciale examina les témoignages de l'Ecriture sainte que l'on a coutume de produire, et elle en porta un jugement conforme à celui que nous avons adopté dans cet ouvrage.

Ensuite elle divisa en trois classes ou catégories les monuments de la tradition, à savoir, en témoignages efficaces et décisifs, en témoignages moins efficaces et sujets à contestation, enfin en témoignages obscurs et secondaires, dont l'efficacité dépend d'un raisonnement. Un des membres de la commission fut chargé de réunir et de coordonner tous ces documents, afin d'en présenter le tableau au Saint-Père.

Au sujet de la possibilité et de l'opportunité de la définition, la commission spéciale fut unanime. Elle appuya son opinion sur l'autorité du concile de Trente, sur le consentement actuel de l'épiscopat, manifesté dans ses réponses à S. S. Pie IX, sur l'absence de tout obstacle, et sur d'autres motifs analogues.

Le Saint-Père ne considéra pas ce remarquable travail

comme définitif. Il le soumit à l'examen de deux nouvelles commissions extraordinaires: l'une composée de dix-neuf cardinaux, l'autre composée de Messeigneurs Rossani, Tizzani, Barnabò, Frattini, Angelini, Bizarri, Capalti, Tommassetti, du chanoine Audisio, du chanoine Cossa, des RR. PP. Spada, Perrone, Passaglia, Schrader, Trullet, membres de la commission spéciale, auxquels furent adjoints les RR. PP. Palermo, de l'ordre de Saint-Augustin; Paul de Saint-Joseph, de l'ordre des Carmes déchaussés; Antoine-Marie Rigano, de l'ordre des Mineurs observantins, et Theiner, de la Congrégation de l'Oratoire. Le Saint-Père voulut aussi que le R. P. De'Ferrari, de l'ordre de Saint-Dominique, commissaire du Saint-Office, prît part à ces travaux.

Ce fut le 2 août 1853, que cette commission extraordinaire se réunit sous la présidence du cardinal Fornari (15).

A l'exception de deux membres, qui avaient fait partie de la commission des vingt consulteurs, tous les théologiens réunis furent d'avis que le privilége de la sainte Vierge était solidement prouvé par des arguments tirés de la sainte Ecriture, des monuments de la tradition, de la doctrine, du *magistère* et de l'esprit de l'Église, et de la déclaration du concile de Trente. Tous, à l'exception d'un seul, jugèrent que le Saint-Siége pouvait, sans déroger aux règles ordinaires, prononcer la définition du mystère de la Conception Immaculée de Marie (16). Ce fut aussi l'avis unanime des cardinaux.

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[15] Etaient absents, quoique membres de la commission, Mgr Maccioti et LL. EE. Recanati et Caterini, dont les opinions avaient été imprimées dans les trois volumes des Avis des consulteurs.

[16] Parmi les vingt consulteurs primitifs il en était un troisième qui avait opiné d'abord contre l'opportunité de la définition; mais dès qu'il eut vu les réponses de l'episcopat, il se rangea à l'opinion commune avec une grande conviction. Un seul membre de la commission extraordinaire fit des remarques

Nous avons emprunté ces faits à la *Courte relation de tout ce que Sa Sainteté Pie IX a fait, ainsi que des sentiments manifestés, par l'épiscopat et par les consulteurs, au sujet de l'Immaculée Conception de la très-sainte Vierge Marie* (17), relation qui fut remise aux cardinaux avant le consistoire du 1er décembre 1854, afin qu'ils connussent les précautions que Sa Sainteté avait prises dans cette grave affaire. Un abrégé de cette relation, écrit en latin, fut offert aux évêques réunis à Rome pour assister à la définition (18).

Les préparatifs dont nous venons de parler ont eu lieu dans le courant de l'année 1853. Dans les premiers mois de l'année suivante, on sut que le Souverain Pontife avait pris la résolution de définir le mystère de l'Immaculée Conception de la très-sainte Vierge, et de donner à cet acte solennel tout l'éclat que les circonstances comportaient. Tout l'épiscopat catholique se fût rendu à Rome, si le Saint-Père l'eût désiré. Mais, soit qu'il n'ait pas voulu imposer un veuvage simultané a toutes les Eglises du monde, soit qu'il ait craint de causer quelque ombrage aux puissances, soit qu'il ait eu d'autres motifs, le Souverain Pontife se borna à inviter pour cette solennité les cardinaux étrangers, et un petit nombre de prélats de chaque nation catholique,

[17] *Brevc relazione di quanto si è operato della Santità di nostro Signore Pio P. IX, e de' sentimenti manifestati dall' Episcopato e dai consultori sull' argomento dell' Immacolata Concezione di Maria santissima* Roma 1854.

[18] *Narratio actorum* SS D. N. Pii IX P. M. *super argumento de Immaculato Deiparæ Virginis Conceptu.* 7 pag. fol. Romæ 1854.

critiques contre le travail de la commission spéciale. Ses observations furent imprimées avec des remarques et des notes; elles formèrent le quatrième volume des Avis des consulteurs. Dans un cinquième volume le Saint-Père fit publier l'opinion du R. P. De'Ferrari, avec les remarques des RR. PP. Palermo et Perrone. Ces cinq volumes n'ont reçu aucune publicité.

en laissant parfois le choix de ces évêques au métropolitain (19). Parmi les évêques invités spécialement par le Saint-Père, on en compte plusieurs qui lui avaient fait des observations sérieuses contre l'opportunité ou la possibilité de la définition (20). Le Souverain Pontife qui avait sollicité des évêques une libre profession de leur croyance dans la réponse qu'ils firent à son encyclique du 2 février 1849, ne craignait aucune manifestation quelconque. L'assentiment général de l'épiscopat lui était connu d'avance, et avait puissamment contribué à sa détermination.

Trente à quarante évêques étrangers avaient été invités par le Saint-Père à assister à la solennité de la définition; tous reçurent à Rome, dans les palais apostoliques et dans la maison canoniale du chapitre de Saint-Pierre, une hospitalité royale.

Beaucoup d'autres prélats se rendirent à Rome pour as-

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[19] En Belgique, S. E. le cardinal archevêque de Malines fut personnellement invité, avec un évêque belge à désigner. Son Eminence offrit l'invitation au plus ancien qui l'accepta.

[20] Un de ceux qui ont écrit contre le dogme et contre la bulle *Ineffabilis*, prétend que le Saint-Père n'a invité qu'un petit nombre d'évêques affidés, dont l'assentiment à la bulle était connu. Or je tiens de la bouche même de feu Mgr Sibour, que je vis à Paris lorsque je me rendais à Rome, que le Souverain Pontife l'avait invité plusieurs fois et avec instances à entreprendre le voyage de la ville sainte, et à assister aux solemnités de la définition. Personne n'ignore que Mgr Sibour avait élevé d'abord des doutes sur la possibilité de prouver théologiquement la prérogative de la sainte Vierge, et par conséquent de la définir; mais qu'après la définition, à son retour de Rome, il proclama le jugement du Saint-Père au milieu de son troupeau avec une conviction profonde, et avec une rare éloquence. L'écrivain qui accuse le Saint-Père d'avoir convoqué des évêques affidés, l'accuse aussi de n'avoir eu aucun égard à l'opinion des évêques; c'est une nouvelle calomnie, mais qui détruit la première. Si le Saint-Siége ne tenait pas compte de l'opinion des évêques, pourquoi invitait-il seulement ceux qui étaient favorables au jugement doctrinal? et s'il n'a invité que les affidés, pourquoi ne s'est-il pas appuyé sur leur sentiment? L'iniquité a donc menti à elle-même. Le fait est que, dans tout l'univers catholique, il n'y eut que quatre ou cinq évêques qui, avant la définition, élevèrent des doutes sur l'Immaculée Conception. Tout l'épiscopat était donc affidé, et le choix du Saint-Père était facile.

sister à cette fête. Le souverain Pontife soumit à leurs délibérations le projet de bulle déjà élaboré par les théologiens consulteurs et par une congrégation de cardinaux. Comme ces délibérations ont eu du retentissement, et qu'elles constituent une des circonstances les plus remarquables qui ont précédé immédiatement la définition, j'en donnerai ici une idée aussi exacte que possible.

Les évêques présents à Rome reçurent l'invitation officielle de se réunir, le lundi 20 novembre, au palais du Vatican, à 9 heures du matin, en costume épiscopal, avec le rochet et la mozette. Le Saint-Père leur avait fait remettre le projet de bulle imprimé, les volumes des *Pareri*, et le récit des actes du Saint-Siége.

L'assemblée eut lieu dans la grande salle ducale du Vatican, vaste place, peinte il y a deux ou trois siècles par les grands maîtres de l'Italie. Au fond de la salle s'élevait, sous un dais en velours, un magnifique crucifix en ivoire; sur l'estrade où il était placé, on voyait trois fauteuils destinés aux trois cardinaux Brunelli, Caterini et Santucci, chargés par le Saint-Père de présider l'assemblée des évêques. Trois rangs de bancs à dossier couverts de beaux tapis verts, étaient disposés à droite et à gauche des présidents; les archevêques et les évêques y furent placés par les maîtres des cérémonies dans l'ordre d'ancienneté. Les théologiens consulteurs étaient placés le premier jour au fond de la salle, vis-à-vis des présidents, mais afin qu'on les comprit mieux, ils occupèrent, dans les séances suivantes, l'espace qui était resté vide, entre l'estrade des présidents et les bancs des évêques, près des deux prélats secrétaires.

Quand tous les évèques eurent pris place, le cardinal Brunelli se mit à genoux devant le crucifix avec ses col-

lègues et tous les membres de l'assemblée, pour réciter le *Veni Creator* et *l'Ave Maria*. Ensuite, il lut un discours latin, dans lequel il déclara que le Saint-Père éprouvait la joie la plus vive de voir qu'un nombre aussi considérable d'évêques étaient accourus de toutes les parties du monde pour assister à la définition du privilége de la très-sainte Vierge, et qu'il désirait entendre leur avis sur le projet de bulle qu'il avait fait préparer, mais qui ne répondait pas encore tout à fait à sa pensée.

Son Eminence ajouta que le Souverain Pontife n'avait point eu l'intention de réunir les évêques en concile; ni d'autoriser une discussion sur le fond de la question ou sur l'opportunité de la définition, deux points dont il se réservait le jugement, mais qu'il désirait connaître les observations que leur suggéreraient les termes du projet de bulle qu'ils avaient en mains (21).

Comme il était impossible de discuter les termes du projet de bulle sans entrer au fond de la question, et sans faire valoir les considérations de temps, de lieux et de personnes qui engageaient à la modifier, toutes les observations roulèrent sur la valeur des arguments allégués dans le projet, et sur l'opportunité de publier la bulle dans une forme, plutôt que dans une autre. Le cardinal président laissa aux évêques une entière liberté, les écoutant avec la plus grande attention, et faisant prendre note exacte de toutes les observations qu'il croyait devoir soumettre à l'appréciation du Saint-Père. Lorsque des remarques contradictoires avaient été présentées, il les faisait annoter toutes, afin que Sa Sainteté en jugeât.

[21] Chaque exemplaire de ce projet de bulle fut remis aux évêques avec une note manuscrite ainsi conçue: *Da esaminarsi la modalità delle expressioni. On examinera la forme des expressions.*

Voici la marche qui fut suivie: un des prélats secrétaires commença la lecture du projet de bulle, et s'arrêta après chaque paragraphe, afin de laisser aux évêques la liberté de s'expliquer. Quand aucun membre de l'assemblée ne demandait la parole, ou quand les remarques étaient terminées, il poursuivait la lecture.

Les observations des évêques portèrent sur trois points principaux, les textes de l'Ecriture, les monuments de la tradition et la forme de la bulle.

Quelques évêques firent remarquer qu'on citait, dans le projet de bulle rédigé par les théologiens, plusieurs passages de l'Ecriture, dont le sens est au moins douteux, et qui certainement dans le sens littéral ne prouve pas le dogme. Ils ajoutèrent que l'on affirmait d'une manière trop absolue que la victoire de Marie sur le péché est consignée dans nos Livres saints; que les Ecritures expliquent d'une manière admirable la pureté de son âme; que les prophètes ont célébré son intégrité originelle: ces expressions leur paraissaient un peu outrées. Ils voyaient aussi un inconvénient à placer les passages des livres Sapientiaux entre la célèbre prophétie de la Genèse et la Salutation angélique, entre le Proto-Evangile et l'Evangile, comme si la valeur des uns était égale à celle des autres. Après avoir entendu encore plusieurs observations de détail, le cardinal président mit aux voix le maintien ou la suppression des passages de l'Ecriture, empruntés aux Psaumes et aux livres Sapientiaux, qui avaient été l'objet principal de ces critiques, et les secrétaires s'apprêtaient à recueillir les suffrages, lorsqu'un des membres de l'assemblée demanda la parole et s'exprima à peu près en ces termes:

Eminence, il me semble que l'assemblée est exposée en

ce moment à voter sur une équivoque. Tout le monde est d'accord sur ce point que la sainte Ecriture doit être citée dans la bulle d'après son sens littéral ou mystique; et qu'il faut y supprimer tous les passages qui ne supporteraient point la discussion. Mais, d'autre part, on ne peut se dissimuler que le projet de bulle renferme beaucoup de passages des Livres saints, que les anciens Pères et l'antique Eglise ont employés en parlant des prérogatives de la Mère de Dieu, et qui sont très-propres à nous faire entendre ce que les siècles précédents ont pensé de cette Vierge incomparable. Il y aurait donc un véritable inconvénient à supprimer ces passages; car ils expriment la doctrine de l'Eglise. Au fond les critiques dont le projet de bulle a été l'objet, tombent moins sur l'emploi de ces textes que sur la manière dont ils sont employés. Ce qu'on ne veut point, c'est que des passages dont la signification favorable dépend de leur sens approprié, accommodatice, figurent dans la bulle, comme s'ils prouvaient par leur sens littéral. Ce qui choque, c'est que ces témoignages des livres Sapientiaux soient cités entre le Proto-Evangile et l'Evangile, comme s'ils fournissaient une preuve semblable à celle que fournissent ces livres; chose qui n'est pas. Mais si la bulle citait les passages des livres Sapientiaux ou bien dans leur sens mystique, entendu de l'Eglise, où dans leur sens approprié, comme monuments de la tradition, comme souvenir de la doctrine des Pères qui ont exprimé, à l'aide des ces passages, la croyance de leur temps, il n'est personne sans doute qui réclamerait; au contraire, tous nos collègues en voteraient le maintien. La seule chose à faire serait donc de placer ces passages de l'Ecriture sainte dans leur vrai jour; de les employer dans le sens des Pères, et comme

monuments de l'antique tradition. Dès lors toute exagération aurait disparu; toute inexactitude serait corrigée, et le texte de la bulle gagnerait en force et en beauté.

Ces remarques obtinrent un assentiment général très-marqué. Le cardinal président, qui le comprit, demanda à la vénérable assemblée, si elle entendait conserver les témoignages de l'Ecriture de la manière qui venait d'être expliquée; et à l'instant tous les évêques se levèrent en corps en signe d'approbation. Il fut arrêté que les secrétaires prendraient note de ce vœu des évêques pour le communiquer au Souverain Pontife, et celui-ci ordonna d'en tenir compte dans la rédaction définitive de la bulle, comme chacun peut le voir aujourd'hui.

Les témoignages des saints Pères furent aussi soumis à un examen sévère. Quelques évêques firent observer que beaucoup de textes étaient cités sous le nom des auteurs auxquels ils n'appartenaient point d'une manière certaine; qu'en alléguant ces autorités douteuses, contestables, on ouvrait la voie aux disputes et aux récriminations des hérétiques; qu'il vaudrait mieux citer un plus petit nombre de témoignages incontestables, que cette multitude de textes plus ou moins sujets à contestation.

Un des théologiens consulteurs répondit que, dans le projet de bulle, on avait soigneusement distingué les livres dont l'auteur était connu, de ceux dont l'auteur est resté inconnu; que l'on aurait tort de négliger les livres anonymes, lorsqu'ils sont très-anciens; que ces écrits sont des monuments très-respectables de l'antiquité chrétienne, dont l'autorité est manifeste par la manière dont ils sont écrits et dont ils sont cités par les grands docteurs et par l'Eglise même dans ses conciles.

Ces remarques n'apaisèrent point tous les évêques. Pour satisfaire ceux qui réclamaient encore, le cardinal Brunelli fit mettre aux voix le maintien ou la suppression des deux passages qui avaient été l'objet principal des critiques; à savoir, les paroles de saint Ambroise, au commentaire sur le psaume cxviii, et celles de saint Augustin, prises dans son livre *De la nature et de la grâce*. Quand les votes furent recueillis, on en trouva une douzaine pour la suppression de ces deux passages, et quatre ou cinq pour la suppression du passage de saint Ambroise seul. On eut alors la mesure de l'opinion des évêques sur les autres témoignages des Pères.

La forme du projet de bulle donna lieu aussi à plusieurs remarques critiques.

D'abord quelques évêques en trouvaient le ton un peu trop vif. Ils y voyaient les traces de la polémique, et les allures de l'Ecole. Ce n'est point là, disaient-ils, le ton qui convient dans un décret solennel du Saint-Siége, dans une définition de foi. Les hérétiques s'empareront de ce document et le discuteront dans ses moindres détails. En donnant prise à leurs critiques, on augmentera les difficultés de la lutte qu'il faudra infailliblement soutenir. Un savant prélat posa même la question de savoir s'il ne vaudrait pas mieux que le Saint-Siége supprimât tous ces développements du projet de bulle, et se borna à énoncer la définition en termes sacramentels, comme un canon de concile, sans explication ni commentaire.

Un autre prélat répondit à ces observations à peu près en ces termes:

Il n'est personne dans cette illustre assemblée, révérendissimes seigneurs, qui voudrait à dessein poser une pierre de

scandale sous le pied des hérétiques, nos frères séparés, ou même les blesser par des mesures superflues; mais d'autre part, il y aurait un inconvénient immense à sacrifier les développements de l'enseignement catholique à de malheureux préjugés. Ne nous effrayons pas de l'opposition présumée des sectes. Elles ne combattront pas la définition du privilége de la Mère de Dieu, avec plus d'animosité et d'acharnement que leurs devanciers n'ont combattu les canons du concile de Trente. Que d'objections, que de clameurs n'ont pas été élevées contre les décrets dogmatiques de cette sainte assemblée? Tous les chefs de la réforme les ont attaqués avec fureur et à outrance. Et cependant qui, parmi les protestants de nos jours, connaît encore ces objections? qui pourrait, qui voudrait les reproduire? Elles sont complétement oubliées. Il en sera de même des difficultés que l'hérésie élèvera peut-être contre la définition de l'Immaculée Conception. Si les sectes l'attaquent, leurs trames seront bientôt brisées, et tout ce bruit s'évanouira comme une fumée sous le souffle des vents.

On conçoit que des prélats, qui se trouvent sans cesse en face de l'hérésie se préoccupent de ces difficultés et tâchent de les prévenir; mais qu'il nous soit permis, à nous qui ne comptons point de frères séparés dans nos troupeaux, de demander au Père commun des fidèles cette doctrine salutaire qui éclaire les esprits et nourrit les âmes. Le chef de l'Eglise, s'il doit éviter de blesser les hérétiques, doit aussi, et à plus de titres, enseigner aux catholiques les vérités saintes, et leur indiquer la base de leur croyance. Pour moi, je trouve admirable l'idée d'énumérer dans la bulle de définition les sources principales des raisons et des arguments à l'aide desquels on prouve le mystère: j'en ai

été vivement frappé à la lecture de ce document; aussi, je vous l'avoue, je regretterais beaucoup que ce trésor nous fût enlevé. Si on supprimait ces arguments, la difficulté se présenterait sous une autre forme, mais elle ne disparaîtrait pas. Les hérétiques soutiendraient alors qu'on ne propose aucun argument, parce qu'au fond on n'en a pas; que l'on fuit la discussion; que l'on impose une croyance nouvelle sans motifs, d'une manière arbitraire, en vertu d'un acte despotique, injustifiable. La discussion sur ce terrain, loin d'être plus facile, serait peut-être plus ardue. La vérité ne triomphe jamais sans lutte; en vain s'efforcerait-on de l'éviter. D'ailleurs, ne nous faisons pas illusion, si l'hérésie s'émeut aujourd'hui, c'est bien moins des arguments par lesquels on prouve le mystère de l'Immaculée Conception de la sainte Vierge, que de l'unité admirable de l'Eglise catholique qui éclate dans cette assemblée. A la voix du premier pasteur, on a vu accourir autour de la chaire apostolique les évêques des contrées les plus lointaines du globe; on les a vus se réunir ici pour délibérer avec une union parfaite de pensée et de sentiment, avec un calme, une dignité, une fraternité toute chrétienne, nobles sentiments que nous trouvons tous dans nos cœurs; voilà ce qui trouble l'hérésie, voilà ce qui émeut l'incrédulité; voilà ce qui fait sensation dans le monde; mais voilà aussi ce qui fait notre consolation et notre force, ce qui fait notre gloire et notre bonheur.

Ce discours fut salué par des signes éclatants d'approbation, parce qu'il rendait la pensée de toute l'assemblée. Il parut même dissiper les appréhensions qui s'étaient produites dans les observations de quelques prélats et rassurer les esprits les plus timides.

Par un sentiment de prudence, que l'on s'explique facilement, deux prélats, l'un français et l'autre italien, demandèrent au cardinal président, s'il ne convenait point de faire mention dans la bulle du vœu et même du jugement de l'Episcopat? Ils espéraient pouvoir résoudre ainsi plus aisément quelques objections spécieuses que l'incrédulité ne manquerait pas de faire, et ajouter à la définition une plus grande autorité extrinsèque.

Il faut le dire, cette proposition ne rencontra aucun écho dans l'assemblée des évêques. Un des prélats qui y était contraire, crut devoir la repousser au nom de ses collègues, à peu près en ces termes:

Puisque nous ne sommes point réunis en concile, nous n'avons pas eu l'occasion de prononcer un jugement dogmatique, dans le sens des saints canons. Comment donc faire mention, dans la bulle, d'un jugement qui n'a pas eu lieu? Pourquoi d'ailleurs faire intervenir le jugement des évêques? Leur croyance unanime n'est-elle pas assez connue? Elle est écrite à chaque page du recueil de nos réponses que Sa Sainteté a fait publier, et au besoin notre présence en ce lieu suffirait pour la faire connaître à tout l'univers. Personne n'ignore dans le monde que les évêques, le clergé, et les fidèles adhèrent d'esprit et de cœur à la croyance que le Saint-Siége va définir. Aucun doute n'est possible à cet égard.

Il vaut infiniment mieux que le Souverain Pontife prononce seul la définition de l'Immaculée Conception, afin que ce jugement solennel soit catholique dans sa forme, comme il est catholique pour le fond. Je m'explique.

La définition sera catholique pour le fond, parce que l'Eglise seule se préoccupe aujourd'hui des prérogatives et

de la gloire de la Mère de Dieu. Nous voyons quel intérêt général ont excité, dans le peuple fidèle, le dessein de Sa Sainteté, et l'attente de la définition qui nous a conduits dans la ville sainte. Tout ce qui contribue à l'honneur de Marie intéresse l'Eglise et lui tient souverainement à cœur. Les sectes au contraire semblent conspirer à couvrir d'injures et d'opprobres la Mère de Dieu. Leurs blasphèmes qui retentissent partout, que de fois n'ont-ils pas attristé nos oreilles? On peut dire que les hérétiques sont les ennemis naturels de la Vierge incomparable destinée à écraser chaque jour la tête du serpent. Les catholiques seuls la traitent comme leur Mère, et l'aiment de tout leur cœur. La décision dogmatique, qui ajoutera une nouvelle auréole à la couronne déjà resplendissante de Marie, est donc éminemment catholique, par son objet, par son fond.

Elle sera catholique aussi dans sa forme, si le Souverain Pontife prononce seul.

Les communions séparées peuvent prendre certaines décisions dogmatiques dans la forme synodale, à la majorité des voix. C'est ainsi qu'elles ont adopté des symboles hérétiques, et imposé silence à ceux qui déviaient de leurs croyances. Mais ces communions sont incapables d'établir et de faire prévaloir une décision dogmatique par voie d'autorité. Elles n'ont pas de pasteurs, point de docteurs, munis d'une mission divine. Personne, chez elles, n'a reçu du Ciel la promesse de l'infaillibilité.

L'Eglise catholique seule possède une hiérarchie d'institution divine, dont le chef suprême, clef de voûte de l'édifice spirituel, ne peut faillir en matière de foi, mais oblige tous les enfants de Dieu à adhérer à sa croyance et à vivre dans sa communion. Si le Souverain Pontife prononce seul la

définition de l'Immaculée Conception, à laquelle tous les fidèles adhéreront spontanément, son jugement fournira une démonstration pratique de l'autorité souveraine de l'Eglise en matière de doctrine, et de l'infaillibilité dont Jésus-Christ a investi son vicaire sur la terre.

Au contraire, si le jugement des évêques intervient dans la définition, loin d'obtenir ces avantages, le Saint-Siége semblera flatter des opinions surannées et depuis longtemps flétries. Applaudissons donc sans réserve à la sagesse du Souverain Pontife qui a résolu, pour le bien de l'Eglise entière, de prononcer seul la définition que nous désirons.

C'était la pensée commune: ces paroles furent applaudies comme l'expression fidèle des sentiments qui animaient tous les évêques.

Ce fut à la suite de ce discours qu'une manifestation générale, animée, presque enthousiaste de respect et d'attachement au Saint-Siége eut lieu et devint un des épisodes les plus touchants de ces assemblées. Les évêques d'une voix unanime protestèrent de leur vénération pour le chef de l'Eglise, et des vœux qu'ils formaient pour son bonheur. Il est impossible de décrire le spectacle qu'offrit à ce moment l'illustre assemblée.

Ces délibérations que nous venons d'esquisser occupèrent quatre séances, qui eurent lieu les 20, 21, 23 et 24 novembre. Le premier jour on y compta au delà de quatre-vingts prélats, et le dernier jour environ cent vingt.

Le Sacré Collége des cardinaux n'y assista pas. Le Saint-Père voulait, selon les usages, le consulter à part.

Si j'ai retracé en détail les principales circonstances qui ont signalé ces mémorables assemblées, c'est d'abord parce qu'elles offrent un très-grand intérêt pour l'histoire de

l'Eglise, et ensuite parce qu'il importait, en les racontant avec fidélité, de faire justice des préjugés et des erreurs de certains esprits inquiets et chagrins, qui tantôt en ont contesté et tantôt exagéré l'importance. Les uns se sont plaints de ce que les évêques avaient été effacés et mis à l'écart; les autres de ce qu'ils n'avaient point fait leur devoir, accompli leur mission, dans ces conjonctures solennelles. L'histoire impartiale répond à ces injustes accusations: elle prouve que le Saint-Père a su, dans cette grande affaire, concilier d'une manière admirable les intérêts généraux de l'Eglise avec les droits de son autorité et la dignité des évêques. Le pouvoir souverain a gardé ses prérogatives; l'autorité des évêques a été honorée; les liens de l'unité ont été resserrés; la fraternité qui lie les pasteurs au centre de l'unité, et qui les attache les uns aux autres, a brillé d'un vif éclat. Tout le monde a senti que dans ces rapports, fondés sur la constitution divine de l'Eglise, il y a quelque chose de grand, de noble, de consolant et de surnaturel.

Aucune parole ne peut rendre, je le répète, les sentiments dont les évêques étaient pénétrés pendant ces augustes assemblées. Un double sentiment de vénération réciproque et de douce amitié les animait, les rapprochait, en faisait une seule famille.

L'atmosphère y était toute pénétrée de respect, de dignité, je dirai même d'une certaine majesté, manifeste pour tous. Le spectacle de ces vénérables vieillards, de ces courageux confesseurs de la foi, de ces généreux pasteurs, réunis au pied du crucifix, sous la présidence de trois princes de l'Eglise, pour délibérer sur les prérogatives de la Mère de Dieu, était tout à la fois imposant et émouvant; il élevait naturellement la pensée jusqu'à cette cité de Dieu, dont

l'Eglise catholique est l'image sur la terre. La parole ne peut rendre ce que la vue de cette assemblée inspirait de nobles et de saintes pensées. Pour le comprendre il faut l'avoir senti (23).

Après avoir consulté les évêques, le Saint-Père consulta les cardinaux de l'Eglise romaine qu'il réunit en consistoire secret le 1er décembre suivant. Ces éminents personnages connaissaient déjà tout ce que le Souverain Pontife avait fait pour préparer la définition de l'Immaculée Conception (24). Cependant il leur rappela, dans son allocution, l'extension rapide qu'avait prise la dévotion du clergé et des fidèles envers la Vierge Immaculée; les nombreuses suppliques adressées à Grégoire XVI et à lui-même, dans le but d'obtenir la définition; les travaux des consulteurs et des cardinaux délégués pour discuter l'affaire, les réponses des évêques à l'encyclique du 2 février 1849, réponses qui réclamaient presque toutes la définition immédiate de la prérogative de la sainte Vierge; et puis il déclara qu'il avait l'intention de prononcer ce jugement le 8 du mois de décembre, fête de l'Immaculée Conception; ajoutant, qu'avant de s'y résoudre, il voulait, à l'exemple de ses prédécesseurs, demander l'avis du Sacré Collége (25).

Le consistoire fut secret. On prétendit néanmoins qu'un cardinal étranger y avait émis des observations contraires au

[23] Le 29 novembre le Saint-Père nomma évêques assistants au trône pontifical, tous les prélats présents à Rome, qui n'étaient pas encore revêtus de cette dignité, avec cette clause que les douze évêques assistants les plus anciens exerceraient seuls leurs fonctions, le jour de la définition. Ce témoignage de respect et d'affection, que Sa Sainteté donna aux évêques est postérior aux assemblées que nous venons de décrire.

[24] *Breve relazione di quanto si è operato della santità di N. S. Pio P. IX, e dei sentimenti manifestati dall'episcopato et dai consultori sull'argomento dell'Immacolata Concezione di Maria SS.* fol. Roma 1854.

[25] *SS. D. N. Pii, div. Providentia Papæ IX, Allocutio habita in consistorio secreto die* 1 *Decembris, anno* 1854.

projet du Saint-Père. La chose est fort incertaine; mais ce bruit prouve combien l'on était convaincu que la liberté la plus parfaite avait été laissée aux cardinaux et aux évêques dans toute cette affaire; c'est pour ce motif que nous en faisons mention. Il est bon que l'on sache que le Saint-Siége n'a pas exercé la moindre contrainte morale sur les personnes chargées par lui d'examiner et de discuter cette grande question; mais qu'il a conservé à toutes une liberté sans bornes.

Lorsque le Saint-Père eut constaté l'assentiment unanime dn Sacré Collége à son dessein, il s'applaudit de cet accord, et annonça qu'il prononcerait la définition de l'Immaculée Conception le 8 décembre suivant; comme il le fit en effet.

LEO XIII

From original painting in Mariana Library, Catholic University, Washington, D. C.

CHAPTER XV

LETTER OF CARDINAL LAMBRUSCHINI TO CARDINAL FRANSONI

Prefect of the S. C. di Propaganda Fede

EMINENTISSIMO PADRONE ED AMICO

È da lungo tempo che io desiderava di dare a Vostra Eminenza una pubblica testimonianza della stima ed intima venerazione che le professo per le tante e così chiare virtù, che a guisa di oro purissimo in Lei risplendono, e le quali attirano giustamente l' ammirazione comune. Che se la santità della vita a perizia delle divine cose congiunta sono li due pregi che caro rendono a tutti l' Uomo di chiesa, ed un Personaggio della più sublime dignità rivestito, chi meglio di Vostra Eminenza manifestò in sè insieme congiunte queste due nobilissime prerogative negli alti ed importanti uffici, che ad esempio e conforto de'buoni sostenne pria in Portogallo, ed ora in Roma principalmente nella Prefettura della S. Congregazione di Propaganda Fide, che la Santità di N. S. Papa GREGORIO *XVI giusto estimatore, e conoscitore del vero merito volle alle vigili sue cure affidata, come a quegli, cui troppo bene un tale incarico si conveniva? Ora tra le virtù sue, frutto di una soda e religiosa pietà, risplende la più tenera divozione verso la cara nostra Madre Maria, alla quale lía Ella consagrato i più puri affetti del figliale suo cuore; affetti che a Lei riescono senza meno graditi oltremodo ed accetti. Il perchè avendo io già meditato, ed oggi condotto a termine un teologico mio lavoro sull' immacolato concepimento dell' eccelsa nostra Regina, ho giudicato ottimo consiglio quello d'intitolarlo all' Eminenza Vostra, che professa a questo riguardo la stessa dottrina che io difendo, e che in-*

oltre volle più d' una volta eccitarmi a farlo, ed ultimato che fosse, a pubblicarlo colle stampe. Accolga Ella dunque con la bontà la presente offerta, non per ciò ch'ella è in se stessa, ma sibbene in grazia del suo argomento che certo so starle a cuore quanto altri mai. Mi darà così una novella prova dell' amicizia di cui da lunga stagione mi onora, ed obbligherà in pari tempo la mia riconoscenza a corrisponderle con altrettanto affetto ed ossequio, col quale baciandole umilissimamente le mani, mi pregio di confermarmi.

Di Vostra Eminenza.

Roma li 25 *Dicembre* 1842

Umo, Devmo Servitor vero, ed Amico
L. CARD. LAMBRUSCHINI
VESCOVO DI SABINA.

CARDINAL LAMBRUSCHINI

SULL' IMMACOLATO CONCEPIMENTO DI MARIA

L'argomento che in questa breve e polemica Dissertazione noi imprendiamo a trattare, esercitò già le dotte penne di più valenti scrittori, fra quali basterà qui di nominare Santo Alfonso de'Liguori, il Cardinale Sfondrati, il Suarez, il Gesuita Budrolio, il Padre Trombelli, il Cappuccino Luigi Francesco d'Argentano, il Federici, e molti altri, per non parlare della numerosa schiera di teologi del chiaro e benemerito ordine Francescano, che in ogni tempo e con edificante zelo sostennero e difesero questo bel privilegio della Gran Madre di Dio, di essere stata concepita senza la menoma ombra dell'original peccato. Ciò nondimeno noi pure ci siamo prefissi di patrocinare secondo la tenuità delle nostre forze la santa causa della comune nostra Madre; non perchè giudichiamo averne ella bisogno, o perchè da noi si speri di poter aggiungere alcuna cosa di nuovo a quel tanto che già ne fu detto, e scritto da altri; ma sibbene per offerire anche noi alla Celeste Regina un fiorellino almeno del nostro povero giardino, e dimostrarle con quest'offerta quanto sia tenera e costante la divozion filiale che le professiamo. Altronde se non ci lusinghiamo di dire cose nuove, esporremo almeno con forme novelle le ragioni già da altri autori sul nostro argomento allegate, e parleremo dell'eccelso subbietto con tale chiarezza ed ordine da poter confidare che il nostro lavoro non riuscirà del tutto discaro a Maria alla quale è consagrato, e che sia per incontrare ben anche il benigno compatimento de' suoi veri divoti che avranno la bontà di leggerlo.

Con questa intima fiducia entro subito nel dilicato ed importante aringo.

1. E prima di tutto conviene ben definire cosa s'intende sotto nome di *Concezione,* e qual ne sia nel caso nostro il vero significato, onde evitare quella confusione d'idee che

dalla mancanza di una precisa nozion della cosa di che hassi a trattare, venir ne potrebbe.

la Concezione altra è attiva, ed altra passiva.

2. La Concezione altra è *attiva,* e riguarda la generazione del corpo, e la sua organizzazione; altra è *passiva,* e si opera allora quando Dio Signore infonde l' anima nel corpo stesso già debitamente formato ed organizzato: «Conceptio dupli-«citer accipi potest; vel enim est *activa,* in qua sancti Beatae «Virginis parentes opere maritali invicem convenientes prae-«stiterunt ea, quae maxime spectabant ad ipsius corporis «formationem, organizationem et dispositionem ad recipi-«endam animam rationalem a Deo infundendam; vel est *pas-«siva,* cum rationalis anima cum corpore copulatur. Ipsa «enim infusio, et unio cum corpore debite organizato vulgo «nominatur Conceptio *passiva* quae scilicet fit illo ipso in-«stanti, quo rationalis anima corpori omnibus membris, ac «suis organis constanti unitur.» Così l'immortale Benedetto XIV colla comune de'Teologi.[6]

Il Concepimento passivo di Maria fu Immacolato.

3. Dicendo noi pertanto che il concepimento di Maria fu immacolato, non intendiamo già di parlare della Concezione attiva, ossia della generazione del beato suo corpo. Conciossiacchè l'essere concepito da donna senza il marital concorso è un privilegio riservato solo a Cristo, e non ad altri. Noi intendiamo quì di parlare unicamente della Concezione *passiva,* nella quale diciamo che la benedetta anima sua nell' unirsi al corpo per virtù della grazia santificante, nella quale fu creata, immune divenne dal contrarre la benchè minima ombra dell' originale reato.

4. Or che questo bel privilegio sia stato conceduto a Maria chi vorrà mai metterlo in dubbio? Imperciocchè è egli credibile che Iddio abbia voluto permettere, che macchiata fosse dal

[6] In opere *De Festis D. N. I. C., B. Mariae Virginis, et quorundam Sanct.,* cap. xv.
Era troppo conveniente che Maria esente fosse dal peccato di origine.

peccato Colei che destinata era niente meno che ad albergar nel suo seno il prezioso giglio delle Convalli, il vaticinato da' Profeti, l'aspettato dalle genti, il desiderio de' Colli eterni, il Salvatore del mondo? Mancavagli forse il potere per sottrarre dalla legge comune del peccato questa privilegiatissima creatura da Lui prediletta e distinta per modo da farla divenire l'istrumento di nostra redenzione? Che se far questo egli poteva, e se alla stessa dignità sua conveniva che il facesse, qual difficoltà di ammettere che fatto lo abbia, e che applicando anticipatamente alla Vergine santa i meriti della passione e morte del suo benedetto Figliuolo, la esimesse dalla necessità di divenire anche per brevissimo istante schiava del peccato suo capital nemico? E si vorrà egli supporre che maggior grazia non sia stata a Maria concessa di quella conferita a Geremia ed al Battista, i quali santificati pur furono nell' utero materno?

Questa esenzione si prova con argomenti tirati dalle divine Scritture.

5. È vero che le divine Scritture esplicitamente non affermano questo singolar privilegio essere stato a Maria conceduto; ma è vero altresì che tanto nell' antico come nel nuovo patto se ne dice quanto basta per farcelo chiaramente argomentare. Infatti che altro indicar volle Iddio quando fulminando l'Angiol delle tenebre raffigurato nel serpente (il quale indotto avea Eva, e per lei Adamo a trasgredire il divin precetto col mangiare il frutto vietato) pronunziò quelle rimarchevoli parole registrate nel Capo terzo della Genesi, *inimicitiam ponam inter te et mulierem, et semen tuum, et semen illius: ipsa conteret caput tuum, et tu insidiaberis calcaneo eius;* che altro, dico, indicar volle Iddio con tali parole, se non questo che Maria cioè non sarebbe mai stata al suo impero soggetta? Altrimenti, ossia se contrarre dovea essa pure la colpa di origine, come si verificherebbe la perpetua nimistà tra Lei e il demonio in modo

che questo nuocer mai non la potesse? Or che tale vaticinio si riferisca a Maria, li Sagri Interpreti punto non ne dubitano, anzi concordemente lo affermano: «Per mulierem «(dice opportunamente il dotto P. Tirino), praecipue desig- «natur Beata Virgo Maria quae pariendo nobis Christum..... «ut facta est purissima Eva, idest Mater viventium: ita pen- «itus contrivit caput et potentiam huius serpentis. Primo «quia nullum ne quidem *originale* (quod primum et quasi «caput est omnium peccatorum) in se admisit. Deinde quia «nullum etiam peccati fomitem, vel pravam cogitationem «(quae principium, seu caput est actualis peccati) in se ha- «buit. Denique quia haereses et tyrannides omnes per vir- «tutem Christi seminis et filii sui, tam ipsa, quam Christiani «omnes, qui illius quoque semen et filii sunt, perfecte devicit «et profligavit.»

6. Anche queste altre parole registrate nel Capo quarto della Cantica verso settimo; *Tota pulchra es amica mea, et macula non est in te,* perchè non le diremo noi indirizzate dallo Spirito Santo a Maria, cui fecondata egli avrebbe nella pienezza de' tempi colla virtù sua divina, e la quale divenuta così sarebbe l'intemerata sua Sposa? Il certo è che la Chiesa stessa nella sua Liturgia a Lei le consagra, e che Scrittori gravissimi in esse vi scorgono appunto il privilegio della sua immunità dall' original reato. *Ideo immaculata,* dice il'Sofronio citato da San Girolamo, *quia in nullo corrupta*[1]; che se in niuna cosa fu dessa a corruzione soggetta; dunque nè anche nel primo suo concepimento.

Dalla prima Lettera di San Paolo ai Corinti nulla si deduce contro l'immacolato Concepimento di Maria

7. Allegano taluni il notissimo testo di S. Paolo, il quale nella prima sua Lettera ai Corinti afferma, che tutti senza eccezione muoiono in Adamo della morte del peccato; *in Adam omnes moriuntur;* donde essi ne deducono che come la

[1] Hieron, *Serm. de Assumptione.*

Beatissima Vergine fu senza meno per natura essa pure discendente di Adamo; così alla foggia di tutto il resto degli uomini dovette essa ancora essere concepita nell' originale peccato. Si ammette senz' ombra di dubbio la legge generale ricordata da San Paolo per tutta quanta la discendenza di Adamo: ma io domando poteva o no Iddio, secondo il beneplacito di sua graziosissima volontà esimere Maria dalla general legge, a cui tutti gli uomini vanno soggetti? Ma se il poteva, e la dignità di Madre dell' Umanato Verbo richiedeva che il facesse, perchè negare che l'abbia fatto? E che? Non occorrono forse più altre leggi generali che comprendono tutto il resto de' figliuoli di Adamo, dalle quali ciò non pertanto andò certamente esente Maria senza che questa esenzione possa dimostrarsi con parole espresse e chiare della santa Scrittura? Così per cagion d'esempio è legge comune che tutte le donne concepiscano i loro figliuoli per via ordinaria: la Beatissima Vergine ne andò esente avendo conceputo il proprio per opera dello Spirito Santo. È legge comune che tutte le donne cessino di esser Vergini divenendo Madri; e la Santissima Vergine a questa legge non soggiacque, poichè Ella è una Madre Vergine che niente ha perduto della sua integrità verginale coll' aver prodotto il figliuolo di Dio, la quale anzi mercè di cotal parto divenne in Lei perfetta. È legge generale che tutte le madri partoriscano con dolore: *in dolore paries;* la Santissima Vergine va esente da questa legge, conciossiachè San Tommaso dice espressamente ch' ella anzi provò una gioia grandissima quando partorì il suo divin fanciullo: «in partu Virginis nullus fuit dolor, sed maxima «iucunditas[2].» È legge comune che tutti i figliuoli di Adamo siano soggetti a qualche peccato attuale: la Santissima Vergine non vi è punto compresa, essendo comune credenza della Chiesa ch' ella non ha giammai commesso alcun peccato attuale in tutto il corso del viver suo. È legge generale che i

[2] 3. *p. q.* 35.

corpi umani siano ridotti in cenere dopo la loro morte; eppure la Santissima Vergine non subì questa rigorosa pena, conciossiachè dopo di esser morta, rimasto il di Lei Corpo tre giorni nella tomba, risuscitò a somiglianza di Cristo, e fu ricevuta con trionfo in Cielo nel giorno della sua Assunzione. Or, dico io, se dunque è sentenza cattolica da niun contraddetta che la Vergine Santissima sia stata resa immune da tante altre leggi generali comuni a tutto il rimanente degli uomini, qual difficoltà di ammettere che Iddio esentata pur l'abbia da quella del peccato originale che macchia universalmente tutta quanta la figliuolanza di Adamo? A me pare così ripugnante l' opinion contraria colla sublime dignità di Madre di Dio, che io penso doversi riguardare come teologicamente assurda.

Propensione del Concilio di Trento per la nostra sentenza.

8. Mossi, come io penso, da questo gravissimo riflesso li Tridentini Padri si mostrarono non che propensi, ma in qualche momento anche risoluti di decidere la quistione presente nel modo che proponeva il piissimo Cardinal Pacecco, sebbene poi certi riguardi, e l'amor della pace consigliassero al sagrosanto Consesso di finir l' affare ne' termini espressi nel decreto *de peccato originali,* riportato nella Sessione V del Concilio medesimo. Ecco come ne parla il dotto ed esatto Cardinal Pallavicini nella sua storia del Concilio di Trento Libro VII, Capo VII: «Oltre alle disputazioni sopra la di-«sciplina, si esaminarono diligentemente i decreti per la «definizione de' dogmi sopra il peccato originale. E il Pacecco «nello stimolar da principio che si definisse la quistione in-«torno alla Madre di Dio, fu stimato artificioso proponitor di «materia sì dura che non potesse smaltirsi per la propinqua «Sessione. Ma poi si vide che procedea con sincera divo-«zione verso la Beata Vergine. Ed appunto erano arrivati «poc'anzi due Teologi della sua Nazione mandato colà dal «Pontefice, Diego Lainez, ed Alfonso Salmerone, al primo

«de' quali specialmente le memorie antiche della nostra Com-«pagnia attribuiscono che parlasse con frequente eloquenza «per l'opinione favorita dal Pacecco. Lettosi adunque in «una Congregazione generale agli otto di Giugno il decreto «sopra la colpa originale come s'era divisato nelle speciali «Adunanze, il Pacecco veggendo che la final decisione di ciò «non era fattura di si ristretti giorni, richiese, che all'uni-«versal proposizione, la quale dichiarava comune a tutti gli «uomini un tal peccato, si aggiungessero questo parole: *in-«torno alla beata Vergine il Sacro Concilio nulla intende di «definire; benchè piamente si creda Lei essere stata con-«cetta senza peccato originale.* Nel parer di lui concorse «allora la maggior parte; ma i Vescovi e gli altri che inter-«venivano dell' Ordine Domenicano, ardentemente il contrad-«dissero, ed ebbero de' seguaci, opponendo essi, che ove il «credere una parte si dichiarasse pio, il creder l'altra verrebbe «a dichiararsi empio: il che tacitamente era un deffinir la «quistione. E però fu consigliato che si pensasse a parole «onde niuna delle due opinioni ricevesse pregiudizio, ed am-«bedue rimanessero in quello stato in cui erano allora nella «Chiesa. Per esecuzione di ciò nelle adunanze de' Teologi «s'aggiustò il Decreto nell' infrascritto tenore: *Dichiara il «Santo Concilio, non essere di sua intenzione per questo De-«creto, ove parla del peccato originale, comprendere la Beata «Vergine Maria Madre di Gesù Cristo, della qual cosa nulla «intende al presente di dichiarare oltre a ciò che da Sisto «Quarto di felice memoria fu decretato.*

«Non rimase contento di ciò il Cardinal di Giaen. Allegava «egli che nella preterita Congregazione più di due terzi ave-«vano consentito a siffatta aggiunta, *della quale piamente si «crede essere stata concetta senza peccato originale.* Questa «pietà della sentenza non potersi negare da che non solo tutti «gli Ordini Regolari, salvo uno, e tutte la Accademie aderi-«vano a tal credenza come a più pia, ma la Chiesa celebrava

«con solenne rito la Festa della Concenzione. I Legati erano «divisi nell'opinione, perocchè il Cardinal del Monte professò «di credere la Concezione immacolata; del Cervina, riferisce «il Massarello, che tenea la contraria; intorno al Polo non «ho contezza, ma concordavano nel volere, amando tutti e tre «di non lasciar accendere contesa fra le parti cattoliche, e di «non usar vocaboli i quali a veruna di lor togliessero. Rispose «però il Cervino che se nella prossima Adunanza s' era detta «in ciò da vescovi alcuna parola, non l' avean fatto ad inter-«rogazione dei Legati nè in forma valevole a decretare; nell'-«antecedente Congregazione de' 28 di Maggio essersi stabilito «che intorno a questa controversia non si venisse a decisione, «e si serbassero illese ambedue le Parti. Si la proposta forma «si conosceva pregiudicante ad alcuna di loro, potrebbe mu-«tarsi; ma ove no, essere disconvenevole d' introdurne un' «altra con la quale per vie oblique fosse sottratto ciò che il «Concilio negava di concedere direttamente. Allora il Ves-«covo di Astorga propose che si cancellasse quella particella «in cui si diceva, che nulla al presente il Concilio intendea di «dichiarare. Il che per mio avviso aveva questo riguardo, che «rimanesse almen dichiarato, come nell'universale afferma-«zione del peccato originale contratto da tutti gli unomini non «è per necessità compresa la Vergine, e che però l'argomento «per la contraria parte quindi dedotto non rende la sua im-«munità men probabile.

«A tale proposta il Bertano, e gli altri Domenicani fecero «applauso, com' è solito di di chi si vede in maggior rischio, «ma il Cardinal Pacecco, e i seguaci non si appagarono. Fur-«ono però da capo raccolti i pareri, e riuscì quella Congre-«gazione d'inusitata lunghezza. La conclusione fu, che «quantunque la maggior parte stimasse per vera la Con-«cezione senza peccato, nondimeno la maggior parte ancora «stimò meglio l'astenersi dal pregiudicio della sentenza con-«traria. Onde le parole del Decreto furone approvate secondo

«la maniera proposta dall'Astorgese con grave rammarico «del Pacecco.[3]»

Dichiarazione del Concilio.

9. E la cosa fu veramente così come il Pallavicini ce la narra: imperciocchè quel Sacròsanto Concilio dopo avere autorevolmente nel suo Decreto stabilito il Dogma della trasmissione del peccato originale a tutta quanta la discendenza di Adamo, vi aggiunge questa importantissima Clausola: «Declarat tamen haec ipsa Sancta Synodus non esse suae «intentionis comprehendere in hoc Decreto, ubi de peccato «originali agitur, Beatam et Immaculatam Virginem Ma«riam Dei Genitricem sed observandas esse Constitutiones «felicis recordationis Sixti Papae IV sub poenis in eius Con«stitutionibus contentis, quas innovat.»

La dichiarazione del Tridentino conferma l'immunità di Maria dal peccato di origine.

10. Dalla surriferita Storia pertanto, e dalla lettera dell'emanato Decreto si deducono chiaramente due cose, cioè 1°. che la maggiore e più notabil parte di que' venerabili Padri si mostrò persuasa dell'immunità della Beatissima Vergine dal peccato di origine, e ch'era anzi disposta ad emettere una definizione solenne in questo senso; se, come osserva il Pallavicini, il desiderio di non dar occasione a discordie in quelle circostanze, ed altri prudenziali riguardi non avessero consigliato di adottare invece per allora un partito di moderazione, e di pace: 2°. che dichiararono per altro con solennità non esser loro intenzione di comprendere nel preparato Decreto la Beatissima Vergine vera Madre di Dio. Ora questo modo di esprimersi non equivale ad una vera eccezione stabilita da Tridentini Padri a riguardo di Maria? altrimenti come avrebbero potuto dire che non intendevano

[3] Chi desiderasse più ampie notizie sulla Storia di questo Decreto potrà leggere il Padre Strozzi "Controversia della Concezione della B. Vergine Maria," ed il P. Plazza nella sua Causa *"Immaculatae Conceptionis Matris Dei Mariae"* citati dall'eruditissimo Abbate Zaccharia nelle sue note al Pallavicini. Il secondo confutò egregiamente il Launoio, e il Du-pin dichiarati nemici dell' Immacolata Concezione di Maria.

di comprenderla nel Decreto dell'original reato? E che altro infatti significa il non esservi compresa, se non questo appunto ch'Ella cioè ne veniva esclusa? Secondo lo spirito adunque, e la lettera del citato Testo dee dedursi essere stata mente de' PP. Tridentini che Maria nel suo concepimento fu esente ed immune dall'original peccato. Questa mente di que' Padri viene anche dimostrata dal titolo *d' immacolata* concesso alla Beatissima Vergine nella loro dichiarazione, mentre il significato che volle darsi a questa voce o titolo, rimane determinato dalla qualità della macchia di cui parlava il Decreto: ma questo si riferiva al peccato originale, e non alla colpa attuale; dunque intanto si chiamò *immacolata* Maria, in quanto si ebbe intenzione di dire non esser Ella stata concepita nel peccato originale.

Dalla rinnovazione fatta delle Costituzioni Sistine, invano gli avversarii si sforzano di attribuire alla dichiarazione un senso contrario alla pia sentenza.

11. Si dirà che il Tridentino Concilio in quella stessa dichiarazione rinnovò le due notissime Costituzioni di Sisto IV; il quale sotto pena di scomunica riservata al Romano Pontefice proibì che niuna delle due parti dovesse predicare, scrivere ed insegnare che il sostenere la sentenza rispettivamente contraria era peccato ed eresia. Ma ciò che prova? Prova unicamente che il Sacro Concilio non volle sull'argomento emettere alcuna decisione, la qual cosa è vera, nè da noi punto si nega. Ma questo fatto pregiudica forse alla nostra interpretazione sul favor di que'Padri, eccettuati pochi, allopinion che sostiene l'immunità assoluta di Maria dall'original peccato? No certamente; tanto più che in una delle Costituzioni Sistine confermate e rinnovate dai sullodati Padri, quel Sommo Pontefice dopo aver detto, «dignum, quin potius debitum reputamus, universos Christi fideles, ut «omnipotenti Deo . . . . . de ipsius Immaculatae Virginis «mira Conceptione gratias et laudes referant, et instituta

«propterea in Ecclesia Dei, Missas et alia divina officia dicant «et illis intersint;» passa tosto ad aprire i tesori della Chiesa a pro de'fedeli «utriusque Sexus, qui Missam et Officium «Conceptionis eiusdem Virginis gloriosae . . . . . in die festi- «vitatis Conceptionis eiusdem Virginis Mariae, et per octavas «eius, devote celebraverint et dixerint, aut illis horis cano- «nicis interfuerint, quoties id fecerint, eamdem prorsus in- «dulgentiam et peccatorum remissionem consequantur, quam «iuxta felicis recordationis Urbani IV in Concilio Viennensi «approbatae, ac Martini V et aliorum Romanorum Pontifi- «cum Praedecessorum Nostrorum Constitutiones conse- «quuntur illi, qui Missam et Horas Canonicas in Festo Cor- «poris et Sanguinis Domini Nostri Iesu Christi a primis «Vesperis, et per illius Octavas, iuxta Romanae Ecclesiae «constitutionem celebrant, dicunt, aut Missae, Officio et Horis «huiusmodi intersunt.» Come ognun vede, il favore accordato a questa festa è grande, e l'averlo concesso in quella stessa misura onde accordato venne alla Festa ed ottava del Corpo del Signore, provo abbastanza quae fosse a questo riguardo la dottrina dell'Apostolica Sede; e non dimentichiamo che le Costituzioni Sistine furono in ogni lor parte confermate e rinnovate dal Tridentino. Conchiudiamo adunque che sè i Padri di questo Concilio per le ragioni allegate dal Cardinal Pallavicini si astennero dal definire la quistione sull'Immacolato Concepimento di Maria, colla loro dichiarazione peraltro intesero di favorire l'opinion nostra a preferenza della contraria, quantunque da essi apertamente non condannata.

Definizione del Concilio di Basilea adottata dal Sinodo Provinciale di Avignone.

12. Assai prima del Tridentino il Concilio di Basilea non oscuramente, ma apertissimamente avea pronunciato la dottrina sul Concepimento scevro di ogni macchia della Beatissima Vergine Maria «*tamquam piam et consonam cultui*

«*ecclesiastico, fidei catholicae, retae rationi et sacrae* «*Scripturae ab omnibus Catholicis approbandam, tenendam* «*et amplectendam,*» nè per ciò esser lecito a chicchesia il tenere e predicare il contrario, «*nulli de coetero licitum esse* «*in contrarium praedicare et docere.*» Questa definizione fu in seguito rinnovata da un Sinodo Provinciale di Avignone citato anche da Benedetto XIV nella già lodata Opera *de festis Sanctorum.* Ne l'Avignonese Sinodo potrebbe di ciò rimproverarsi, giacchè la dottrina è vera, benchè fosse stata definita come di fede da un Concilio, che cessato avea di esser legittimo, ed era invece divenuto vero Conciliabolo. Infatti abbracciata fu non solo da un gran numero di Teologi italiani, francesi, tedeschi, polacchi, fiamminghi, inglesi, scozzesi, spagnuoli, portoghesi ed orientali; ma sì ancora da molte Accademie ed Università, e segnatamente da quella di Parigi, la quale l'anno 1496 non dubito di obbligare colla santità del giuramento i suoi membri a defenderla sotto pena a' contravventori della espulsione dalla medesima e della perdita de'loro gradi e privilegi.[4]

La stessa Università fiorente allora per uomini dottissimi giunse fino a dichiarare professar essa come di fede la dottrina che asserisce la Beatissima Vergine essere stata concepita senza neo di colpa.

Favore accordato da'Sommi Pontefici all'opinione dell' Immacolato Concepimento di Maria.

13. Quello poi che dee sopratutto rimarcarsi si è che li Romani Pontefici lungi dall'aver mai rigettata o contradettta

[4] Ecco il tenore dello statuto da que Dottori emesso: "Universi tertio congregati post multam, gravem et maturam deliberationem, in èius piissimae doctrinae, quae benedictissimam Dei Matrem ab originali peccato, Dei singulari dono, fuisse praeservatam affirmat; quamque iampridem veram credidimus et credimus, defensionem et propugnationem speciali sacramento coniuravimus nosque devovimus; statuentes ut nemo deinceps sacro huic nostro Collegio adscribatur nisi se huius religiosae doctrinae assertorem strenuumque propugnatorem semper pro viribus futurum simili iuramento profiteatur. Quod si quis ex nostris, quod absit, ad hostes Virginis transfuga, contrariae assertionis, quam falsam, impiam et erroneam iudicamus, spreta non nostra tantum, sed Synodi et Ecclesiae, quae procul dubio summa est, auctoritate, pratrocinium ratione suscipere ausus fuerit, hunc honoribus nostris omnibus privatum atque exauctoratum a nobis et consortio nostro, velut ethnicum et publicanum procul abiiciendum decernimus."

la nostra sentenza, l'hanno anzi favorita e protetta. Sisto IV nella sua Costituzione del 1476, di sopra citata, che comincia: Cum praecelsa meritorum insignia,» oltre le Indulgenze accordate ai devoti dell'Immacolata Concezion di Maria precrisse ben anche la Messa ed Officio in onore di Lei con questa orazione: »*Deus qui per* Immaculatam Virginis Conceptionem *dignum Filio tuo habitaculum praeparasti, concede quaesumus, ut sicut ex morte eiusdem Filii sui praevisa, eam ab* omni labe *praeservasti, ita nos quoque mundos, cius intercessione, ad Te pervenire concedas.*» Questa orazione si usò nella Chiesa Cattolica per lo spazio di quasi cento anni, cioè dal Pontificato di Sisto IV fino a quello di Pio V. È noto infatti che questo Pontefice correndo l'anno 1568 soppresse l'Officio della Concezione stampato e pubblicato sotto Sisto IV accordando al solo Ordine Francesano la facoltà di poterlo recitare. Ciò però fece non perchè in quell' Officio vi fosse alcuna cosa degna di censura, ma affine solo di prescrivere in tutta la Chiesa una maniera uniforme di pubbliche preghiere mentre in quel tempo vari erano gli officii sulla Concezione della Santissima Vergine; per esempio quello di Leonardo de Bussis, di Francesco Quignoni, di Roberto Guagnini ed altri. Fra tanti Officii stimò opportuno quel Pontefice di scegliere dell'Abate Helsino giusta il rito e la forma stabilita nell' Officio della Natività, sostituendo soltanto alla voce *Nativitatis* l'altra *Conceptionis*. Dal che sembra doversi dedurre che San Pio V abbia non oscurato, ma illustrato piuttosto il culto dell'Immacolata Concezion di Maria. Imperocche siccome la Chiesa nella festa della sua Natività non ne celebra la santificazione, in qualunque tempo sia accaduta, ma celebra siccome santa la Natività di Lei, così nella festa della Concezione non celebra la santificazione, ma venera siccome santa ed immacolata la Concezione di essa Vergine Santissima. E. dee qui notarsi che fu appunto S. Pio V, il quale nel Breviario Romano e

nell'Ecclesiastico Calendario stabilì di precetto in tutta la Chiesa la festa appunto della Concezion di Maria; col quale fatto parmi palesato abbastanza il favore che questo Pontefice intese di accordare al culto dell'Immacolato Concepimento di Maria.

Proibizione di parlare contro l'esenzione di Maria dal peccato di origine.

14. Nell' anno 1616 Paolo V sotto le pene e censure contenute nella Costituzione di Sisto IV decretò che nelle pubbliche prediche, lezioni, conclusioni, ed altri pubblici atti qualunque si fossero, niuno avesse ardito di asserire la Beatissima Vergine essere stata concepita nel peccato originale. E conciossiachè poco dopo, ossia l' anno 1622 nel popolo cristiano nati fossero scandali, dissensioni e discordie a cagione della sentenza contraria, Gregorio XV ampliò tosto, ed estese il Decreto di Paolo V anche ai privati scritti e colloqui, «mandans et praecipiens omnibus et singulis su«pradictis, ne de coetero, donec articulus huiusmodi a Sede «Apostolica definitus, vel per Sanctitatem suam, et Sedem «Apostolicam fuerit aliter ordinatum, neque etiam in sermoni«bus et scriptis privatis audeant asserere, quod EADEM *Bea«tissima Virgo fuerit concepta cum peccato originali, nec «de hac opinione affirmativa aliquo modo agere, seu tractare, «exceptis tamen, quibus a Sancta Sede Apostolica fuerit aliter «super his specialiter indultum.*» Concesso poi ai Padri Domenicani con Indulto del 28 Luglio dell' anno stesso, «ut in «quibuscumque privatis eorum colloquiis, seu conferentiis «inter se dumtaxat, et non inter alios, aut cum aliis, de ma«teria eiusdem Conceptionis B. M. V. disserere et tractare «absque ullo poenarum, in dictis decretis contentarum incursu «libere et licite possint.» Comandò per altro e prescrisse in pari tempo sotto gravissime pene a tutte e singole le persone ecclesiastiche, che tanto nella recita del divino Officio, quanto nella celebrazion della Messa si in pubblico che in privato,

non dovessero usare altro nome che quello di *Concezione*. E questo perchè taluni alla voce *Conceptionis* avevano sostituito altra voce cioè *sanctificationis*, col qual fatto dimostravano che da essi non si venerava l' *animazione* della B. Vergine, ma bensì la *mondazione* di essa dal peccato originale per la grazia santificante.

La sola sentenza favorevole al privilegio di Mario può essere sostenuta sì in privato che in pubblico

15. Risulta pertanto dal Gregoriano Decreto che alla contraria sentenza interdetto fu ogni umano commercio, e tolta ad essa la facoltà di poter comparire sì in pubblico che in privato, in voce ed in iscritto, in modo che la sola pia sentenza tanto privatamente, quanto pubblicamente in voce, ed in iscritto, sempre ed ovunque si ascolti. Intanto dunque la prima, quella cioè che nega alla B. Vergine l' immunità dal peccato di origine, fu condannata alla pena di un silenzio cotanto rigoroso, in quanto che fu riconosciuta non consentanea alla ecclesiastica tradizione, ed alla cristiana pietà.

Alessand. VII. rinnova e conferma le Costituzioni de' suoi Predecessori in favore dell' immacolato concepimento di Maria.

16. Finalmente fece eco a'suoi predecessori Alessandro VII, il quale nella sua Costituzione «*Sollicitudo omnium Ecclesiarum*» emanata l'anno 1661 cosi parla: «Nos con«siderantes . . . . volentesque laudabili huic pietati, et de«votioni, et festo, et cultui secundum illam exhibito in Ec«clesia Romana, post ipsius cultus institutionem numquam «immutato, Romanorum Pontificum Praedecessorum Nostro«tum exemplo fovere, nec non tueri pietatem et devotionem «hanc colendi et celebrandi, Beatissimam Virginem, prae«veniente scilicet Spiritus Sancti gratia a peccato originali «praeservatam . . . . . Constitutiones, et Decreta a Romanis «Pontificibus Praedecessoribus Nostris, et praecipue a Sixto «IV, Paulo V, Gregorio XV, edita in favorem sententiae «asserentis animam B. Mariae Virginis in sua creatione et

«in corpus infusione, Spiritus Sancti gratia donatam, et a «peccato originali praeservatam fuisse, nec non in favorem «Festi, et Cultus Conceptionis eiusdem Virginis Deiparae «secundum piam istam sententiam, ut praefertur, exhibiti, «innovamus, et sub censuris et poenis in iisdem Constitutioni-«bus contentis, observari mandamus.»

17. Tali essendo dunque atti aperti e solenni emanati dai sullodati Sommi Pontefici, e non potendosene citare un solò a quelli posteriore, il quale favorita abbia la sentenza contraria, chiaro apparisce che la Santa ed Apostolica Sede, anzi la Chiesa tutta, propensissima si è mostrata sempre, come tuttavia se 'l dimostra a favorire la dottrina, che sostiene Maria stata immune dal peccato di origine, quantunque non ne abbia per anco formato un articolo di fede.

Giudizio dei Santi Padri sulla presente quistione.
Il silenzio dei primi due secoli non pregiudica all' immacolato concepimento di Maria, che anzi lo suppone.

18. Ma passiamo ora a vedere come la sentano su questo punto li Santi Padri che ci tramandarono la Sagra Tradizione della Chiesa, a l'autorità de' quali dee sempre invocarsi nelle quistioni tutte di ecclesiastica disciplina, e di credenza cattolica. Or si vuole candidamente confessare che li primi due secoli della Chiesa osservano un perfetto silenzio sul punto di cui si tratta. Questo silenzio però lungi dal pregiudicare alla nostra dottrina prova anzi secondo la buona critica che allora la medesima era universalmente professata e creduta. Imperciocchè in que' due secoli Maria era con particolar divozione da tutti venerata, e riguardata come privilegiatissima, attesa la sua sublime qualità di Madre di Dio, e tale che per copia di grazia non apparve l'eguale giammai. Che se della sua immunità dal peccato di origine si fosse pur da talun Dottore dubitato, certo altri presa ne avrebbero la difesa, e gli scritti di quei due secoli ce ne darebbero qualche sentore: ma di questo non si ha alcuna traccia o memoria:

dunque il silenzio dei primi due secoli della Chiesa non indebolisce punto la credenza dell'immacolato concepimento di Maria, che anzi lo suppone.

Documento che giustifica tale supposizione.

19. Questa supposizione è poi fondata sopra un documento assai, rispettabile, e questo è la nota Lettera de'Sacerdoti e Diaconi dell'Accaia, nella quale si rifesisce il martirio del glorioso Aposotolo Sant' Andrea, e il discorso da Lui pronunciato innanzi al Proconsole Egea prima della sua passione. In questo il S. Apostolo avrebbe parlato così: *Et propterea, quod ex immaculata terra creatus fuerat primus homo, necesse erat ut ex immaculata Virgine nasceretur perfectus homo, quo Filius Dei, qui ante condiderat hominem, vitam aeternam quam perdiderant homines, repararet.* Quella comparazione della Terra Vergine ci mostra Maria immacolata fin dalla sua origine, attesochè la terra, della quale fu formato il primo Uomo era tale, nè ancora Dio aveva detto ad Adamo *maledicta terra in opere tuo.*[5] Un tal documento fu da prima creduto inventato, o per lo meno sospetto, perchè si leggeva in lingua latina, e non si conosceva il greco esemplare: ma dopo che questo si rinvenne nella Biblioteca Bodleiana, e fu pubblicato da Carlo Cristiano Vuoogo, Scrittore protestante, cessò ogni dubbio fino al punto che il celebre Morcelli non ebbe difficoltà d' inserirlo come autentico e genuino nel suo Calendario della Chiesa Costantinopolitana sotto il giorno trenta di Novembre. Da siffatto documento pertanto risulterebbe che la credenza dell'immacolato concepimento di Maria si professava da' fedeli anche ne'primi due secoli della Chiesa, e che vanta in suo favore una luminosa testimoniana apostolica.

Origene ammette il bel privilegio di Maria.

20. Ora passiamo al secolo terzo. In questo sorse Origene, il quale non in via apologetica, perchè appunto niuno ne dubi-

[5] Gen. cap. 8 v. 17.

tava, ma per modo di discorso ragiona in guisa di Maria da poter chiaramente dedurre ch' egli sul privilegio di Lei la pensava come noi la pensiamo. Ecco infatti come si esprime nell'Omelia VI *in Lucam:* «Quia vero Angelus novo sermone «Mariam salutavit, quem in omni scriptura invenire non «potui, et de hoc pauca dicenda sunt. Id enim quod ait *Ave* «*gratia plena, quod graece dicitur* κεχαριτωμενη, ubi in «scripturis alibi legerim non recordor; sed neque ad virum «istiusmodi sermo est *salve gratia plena.* Soli Mariae haec «salutatio servatur. Si enim scivisset Maria et ad alium quempiam similem factum esse sermonem, habebat quippe «legis scientiam, et erat sancta, et prophetarum vaticinia «quotidiana meditatione cognoverat; numquam quasi pere-« grina eam salutatio terruisset.» Ora la voce greca κεχαριτωμενη, non solo significa *piena di grazia* secondo la versione della Volgata, ma può anche significare *formata in grazia.* E che Origene attribuisse appunto questo significato allo greca voce surriferita si raccoglie chiaramente dalla sua *Omelia* I citata da Santo Alfonso de Liguori dove di Maria parla così; *nec serpentis venenosi afflatibus infecta est.* Se dunque opinò Origene che il maligno serpente, ossia il demonio, neppure col suo pestifero alito offuscò mai Maria, giuoco forza è di conchiudere che dunque secondo Origene Maria non fu giammai dall' original peccato macchiata.

La Liturgia e Menologii Greci confermano la nostra dottrina.

21. Abbiamo poi la liturgia della Chiesa greca riferita dal Lebrun[6] assai più antica di S. Giovanni Crisostomo, nella quale Maria è chiamata *omni parte inculpata;* il che indica abbastanza che quella Chiesa la credeva concepita senza la colpa di origine.

[6] Tom. 4 pag. 408.

E prima del Lebrun il Gesuita Padre Wangueréckio nella sua elaboratissima Opera intitolata «Pietas Mariana Graecorum» stampata in Monaco dal Wagnerio l'anno 1647, raccolse molti passi degli antichissimi Menologii Greci che chiamano Maria, ora *omni naevo intacta,* ora la sola che scampò dalla spiritual morte dell'original peccato, ora quella che *ab aeterno munda fuisse dignoscitur,* ed ora infine *sola ab aeterno digna quae Deipara fieret.* Una tal'opera divenuta oggidì assai rara, e che noi potemmo conoscere quando già era inoltrato questo nostro lavoro, meritò i più splendidi elogi da due dottissimi Cardinali, quali furono il Baronio ed il Sirleto, per non parlare dei Bollandisti che l'ebbero in altissimo pregio.

Padri del Secolo iv favorevoli alla pia sentenza dell' esenzione di Maria dal reato di origine.

22. Passando ora al secolo IV merita di essere citato Santo Anfiloco Vescovo d'Iconio, il quale nella sua orazione quarta *in S. Deiparam,* disse, Dio aver formata la Vergine *sine macula et sine peccato.*

Sant'Ambrogio nella sua esposizione sul Salmo 118 commentando il verso settimo la chiama, *Virgo per gratiam ab omni integra labe peccati.* Certo quì il S. Dottore non fa distinzione alcuna tra peccati attuali e il peccato originale; dunque secondo l'opinion di lui Maria fu immune anche da questo: altrimenti non potrebbe dirsi *integra da* ogni macchia di colpa.

Sant'Epifanio, che morì l'anno 403 nel suo opuscolo *De laudibus Virginis* si esprime così: *Solo Deo excepto, cunctis superior extitit, natura formosior est ipsis Cherubim, Seraphim, et omni exercitu Angelorum . . . Ovis immaculata, quae peperit Agnum Christum.*

Chiara testimonianza di S. Girolamo in favore della nostra dottrina.

23. Continua la catena de'Padri. San Girolamo Dottore di grande autorità, commentando il Salmo settantasette nello

spiegare quelle parole: *Et deduxit eos in nube diei,* dice così: «Ecce Dominus venit Aegyptum in nebula levi. Nubem «levem, aut proprie Salvatoris Corpus debemus accipere quia «leve fuit, et nullo peccato praegravatum: aut certe nubem «levem debemus Sanctam Mariam accipere nullo semine hu- «mano praegravatam. Ecce Dominus venit in Egyptum «saeculi istius super nubem levem Virginem, *et deduxit eos* «*in nub diei.* Pulchre dixit *diei; nubes enim non fuit in* «*tenebris, sed semper in luce.*» Or se giusta la dottrina di S. Epifanio dopo Dio viene Maria, la cui natura è più bella, e più bella, e più chiara della stessa natura angelica; e se la Vergine Santa, secondo S. Girolamo, fu raffigurata in quella lieve nuvoletta predetta dal Profeta, la quale fu sempre nella luce, e non mai nelle tenebre, egli è evidente, che dunque questi due gravissimi Dottori credettero Maria immune dal peccato di origine, mentre se questo avesse potuto contaminarla anche per un solo istante, come si verificherebbe in Lei, che *non fuit in tenebris, sed semper in luce?*

Grave testimonianza di Sant' Agostino su questo argomento.

24. Ma passiamo a riferire la dottrina di Santo Agostino, del quale tanto abusarono li favoreggiatori della sentenza contraria. Questo grande Dottore (che deve considerarsi come l'espressione, e l'organo di tutti li santi Padri, che lo precedettero) confutando Pellagio, il quale asseriva che tutti li figli di parenti battezzati nascevano scevri del peccato originale, scrive così: «Excepta itaque Sancta Virgine Maria, de «qua propter honorem Domini, *nullam prorsus, cum de pec-* «*catis agitur, haberi volo quaestionem;* unde enim scimus «quod ei plus gratiae collatum fuerit *ad vincendum omni* «*ex parte peccatum,* quae concipere ac parere meruit quem «constat nullum habuisse peccatum? Hac ergo Virgine ex- «cepta, si omnes illos Sanctos, et Sanctas (cioè dell'antica «legge) cum hic viverent, congregare possemus, et interro- «gare utrum essent sine peccato, quid fuisse responsuros

«putamus, utrum hoc, quod iste dicit, an quod Ioannes «Apostolus? Rogo vos, quantalibet fuerint in hoc corpore «excellentia sanctitatis, si de hoc interrogari potuissent, nonne «una voce clamarent; si dixerimus quia peccatum non habe- «mus, nos ipsos decipimus, et veritas in nobis non est?»

La voce *renascendi* adoperata dal S. Dottore non favorisce la sentenza contraria.

25. E poichè Giuliano gli obbiettava «Tu ipsam Mariam «Diabolo nascendi conditione transcribis;» quasi il Santo Dottore avesse detto, Maria pure secondo la condizione della natura aver dovuto nel suo nascere appartenere al demonio, così tosto gli rispose: «Non transcribimus Mariam diabolo «conditione nascendi, sed quia ipsa conditio solvitur gratia «renascendi»[7] colle quali parole venne a dire che Maria esente fu dal peccato originale in virtù di una grazia tutta particolare che ne la rendette immune. Nè fa ostacolo a questo senso del S. Dottore la voce *renascendi,* quasi abbia voluto indicare che Maria cessò dalla condizione di schiava del demonio mediante la mondazione dal peccato indi seguita: conciossiachè dal contesto di tutto il discorso si rende manifesto che il S. Dottore intese di parlare contro Giuliano della Concezione appunto, che noi diciamo *passiva,* asserendo immacolato il concepimento di Maria nel primo istante, come dicono le scuole, e non altrimenti nel secondo. E che questa fosse la vera mente del S. Dottore si raccoglie chiaramente dal suo sermone XII *In Natali Domini,* dove si leggono queste precise parole: «Ecclesiae, sicut Mariae *perpetua in-* «*tegritas* et incorrupta foecunditas. Quod enim illa meruit «in carne, haec servavit in mente, nisi quod illa peperit unum, «haec parit multos.» Quì il S. Dottore stabilisce un confronto tra Maria, e la Chiesa, e dice che dell'una come dell' altra eguale fu l'integrità, e che questa fu perpetua, *perpetua integritas:* dunque secondo Santo Agostino non vi fu un

[7] Lib. 4 *contra Iulianum.*

solo istante, in cui, come la Chiesa, così anche Maria non sia stata perfettamente intemerata ed integra: dunque il Santo Dottore esclude in Maria la macchia dell' original peccato; e per ciò nel testo di sopra citato quel *renascendi* non può avere altro senso tranne quello che noi gli abbiamo attribuito.

Li passi del S. Dottore nei quali asserisce propagato in tutti l' original peccato non comprendono la B. Vergine Maria.

26. Che se in altri luoghi delle sue Opere egli sembra asserire il contrario, come quando nella sua Epistola ad Ottato *de origine animarum* dice generalmente «neminem «nasci ex Adam nisi vinculo delicti et damnationis obstrictum, «neminemque inde liberari, nisi renascendo per Christum;» e quando lib. 2. *de baptismo parvulorum* asserisce: «non est «in filiis hominum, nec fuit, nec erit qui nullo unquam pec«cato fuerit obstrictus» e quando finalmente (per non citar quì tutti i luoghi ne quali si riscontrano queste od altre espressioni generali) nel suo Enchiridio capo sesto soggiunge, «nullo excepto, parvuli nascendo peccatum traxerunt;» bisogna sempre ricordarsi della dichiarazione emessa dal Santo Dottore nel Libro *de natura et gratia* cap. 36 ed altrove «excipio B. Virginem, de qua nullam prorsus haberi quaes«tionem volo quoties de peccato agitur, quia vicit omni parte «peccatum;» e supporre quindi che quelle sue conclusioni generali non compredano la Beatissima Vergine, altrimenti converrebbe dire che Sant'Agostino sia caduto in contraddizione con se stesso, ciò che asserir non si potrebbe senza recare gravissima ingiuria a un tanto Dottore.

27. Dopo Santo Agostino ci piace di ascoltare Sant'Efrem Siro, dal quale si chiama la Beatissima Vergine «Immacu«lata et intemerata, incorrupta et prorsus pudica, atque ab «omni sorde et labe peccati alienissima, Dei sponsa et Do«mina nostra.»[8]

[8] Orat. *de Sancta Dei Genitrice.*

Testimonianza di altri Padri della Chiesa in favore del privilegio di Maria.

Più decisamente ancora si esprime San Cirillo Alessandrino che fiorì nel secolo V. Ecco come parla: «omnes homines, «excepto illo, qui de Virgine natus est, et *Sasratissima etiam «Virgine,* ex qua Deus homo prodiit in mundum, exempta, «cum peccato originali nascimur, et gravissima caecitate de«pressi in mundum venimus, quam quidem caecitatem de «radice primi parentis contraximus.»[9] E di questa eccezione arreca la ragione altrove, conciossiachè soggiunge:[10] «Quis «unquam audivit Architectum, qui sibi domum aedificavit, «eius occupationem et possessionem primo suo inimico «cessisse?»

Succede San Massimo Vescovo di Torino, il quale esplicitamente pronunciò: «Idoneum plane Maria Christum habita«culum non pro habitu Corporis, sed *pro gratia originali*» (*Hom. V. ante Natale Domini*). Poi abbiamo S. Proclo discepolo e successore di S. Giovanni Crisostomo, il quale[11] asserisce Maria essere stata *formata di una pura essenza.*

28. Il secolo sesto ci offre S. Fulgenzio, il quale giudiziosamente osserva[12] come l'Angelo col chiamar Maria *piena di grazia* ha voluto far intendere, che l' antica sentenza della primiera ira a riguardo di Lei era *assolutamente distrutta.*

29. Nel VII Sant'Idelfonso a chiare note insegnava Maria essere esente dal reato di origine, «Constat eam ab originali peccato fuisse immunem.[13]

30. Nell'VIII così scriveva San Giovanni Damasceno:[14] «Quoniam futurum erat, ut Dei Genitrix ac Virgo ex Anna «oriretur, natura gratiae foetum antevertere minime ausa est,

[9] In *Evang. Ioan.* L. VI adiecto explanationi Cyrilli per Iudaeum Clichtoveum Neoportuensem Doctorem Theologum Cap. 15. Oper. S. Cyrilli Alexandrini. Basileae 1566.

[10] In Conc. Eph. N. 6.

[11] Orat. V. *Laudat. S. Genitricis.*

[12] *Serm. de Laudibus Mariae.*

[13] Desput. de Virg. Mar.

[14] *Orat. de Nativ. B. M. V.*

«verum tantisper expectavit dum gratia fructum suum pro-«duxisset.» Più positivamente si esprime nella sua orazione II *de Assumptione* dicendo: «ad hunc paradisum serpens «aditum non habuit.» Se dunque nel beato concepimento di Maria la natura non osò di prevenire il parto della grazia, ma aspettò che questa il frutto suo producesse; e se il serpente, ossia il demonio a Lei non ebbe accesso, certo esente andò dal peccato di origine.

31. San Pier Damiani poi che fiorì nel secolo X, escluse affatto de Maria le macchie tutte di Adamo, ossia il peccato di origine colle prave sue concupiscenze: eccone le parole: «Caro Virginis ex Adam sumpta, maculas Adam non ad-«misit.»[15] E perchè? Perchè risponde Santo Anselmo lume chiarissimo del secolo undecimo «decuit, ut Virgo, quam Deus «Unigenito filio suo praeparavit in Matrem, ea puritate «niteret, qua maior sub Deo nequit intelligi.»[16] Ed affinchè sorger non potesse alcun dubbio cagionato dalla generalità delle sue espressioni, il S. Dottore commentando poscia il cap. 12 della lettera di San Paolo a que' di Corinto, spiega più chiaramente la sua mente dicendo: «Omnes mortui sunt «in peccatis sive originalibus, sive voluntate additis, nemine «prorsus excepto, dempta Matre Dei.» Queste parole certo son così determinate ed esplicite che non abbisognano di alcuna dilucidazione.

32. Correndo il secolo XIII San Bonaventura nel suo Sermone II *de Beata Vergine* insegnava, che «Domina nostra «fuit plena gratia in sua sanctificatione, gratia, scilicet, prae-«servativa contra foeditatem originalis culpae.» La stessa dottrina predicavano altri, e più particolarmente il dotto e benemerito Ordine Francesano, che la professò sempre, e difese col più grande vigore.

[15] Orat 2. de Nativ. Mariae.
[16] *De Conceptu Virginali* Cap. 18.

S. Bernardo non fu mai contrario all' immacolato concepimento di Maria: si difende contro tale imputazione.

33. E poichè San Bernardo chiude la serie de' Padri della Chiesa, sembra questo il luogo di esaminare se la sentisse per la contraria opinione, come li sostenitori di questa falsamente ed ingiustamente pretendono. Tutto il loro fondamento si riduce alla celebre lettera indirizzata da questo S. Dottore al Capitolo della Chiesa Lionese, quando mosso anche dall' esempio di altre Chiese particolari, che ne lo aveano preceduto, adottò esso pure il costume di celebrare la festa dell' immacolato concepimento di Maria. Contro l'istituzione di questa festività sorse il Santo Abbate, ed è verissimo che la dichiarò nuova, ignorata da' Santi Padri, ed aliena dal rito ecclesiastico «Unde miramur satis, scrivea egli, quod visum «fuerit hoc tempore quibusdam vestrum voluisse mutare «colorem optimum, novam inducendo celebritatem, quam «ritus ecclesiasticus nescit, non probat ratio, non commendat «antiqua traditio.» Senza entrar quì nell' esame critico se questa lettera sia stata attribuita al Santo Dottore siccome non pochi Teolgi anche di vaglia pretendono, ed ammettendola anzi per genuina, dico, che la medesima non prova in alcun modo l'avversione di San Bernardo alla sentenza che noi difendiamo. Vediamo infatti com' egli giustifichi un tal rimprovero dato al Capitolo Lionese per aver istituito siffatta solennità. «Nam, prosiegue, si sic videbatur, consulenda erat «prius Apostolicae Sedis auctoritas, et non ita praecipitanter, «atque inconsulte paucorum sequenda simplicitas imperi- «torum. Et ante quidem apud aliquos errorem compereram, «sed dissimulabam parcens devotioni, quae de simplici corde, «et amore Virginis veniebat. Verum apud sapientes, atque «in famosa nobilique Ecclesia, et cuius specialiter filius sum, «superstitione deprehensa, nescio an sine gravi offensa etiam «vestri omnium dissimulare potuerim. Quae autem dixi, «absque praeiudicio sane dicta sint sanius sapientis; Ro-

«manae praesertim Ecclesiae auctoritati atque examini totum, «sicut et cetera, quae huiusmodi sunt, universa reservo, «ipsius, si quid aliter sapio, paratus iudicio emendare.» Fin qui il santo Dottore. È da sapersi che di que' tempi la festa dell' Immacolato Concepimento di Maria non era stata per anco introdotta autorevolmente nella Chiesa. Bensì li fedeli e i Cleri di taluni luoghi onoravano di lor privato giudizio con questo titolo e festa la Madre di Dio. San Bernardo pertanto pieno di zelo per allontanare dalla Chiesa qualsivoglia inconveniente ed errore, che introdurre vi si potesse dal giudizio privato, considerando da un lato che la sacrosanta Romana Sede nulla avea pronunciato su questa festività, e vedendola per l'altro ammessa da una Chiesa così antica ed illustre, qual' era la Lionese, temette che l' esempio di lei, che era la prima delle Gallie, potesse far propagare ovunque tale solennità con notabile pregiudizio dei dritti e della suprema autorità della Chiesa Romana. Disapprovò quindi e condannò il Capitolo Lionese perchè si fosse permesso di celebrare ed istituire tale festività senza aver prima su di ciò interpellata la Sede Apostolica: «Nam si sic videbatur, «consulenda erat prius Apostolicae Sedis auctoritas, et non «ita praecipitanter atque inconsulte paucorum sequenda sim«plicitas imperitorium.» Che se aggiunge tale festività esser nuova, non approvata dalla ragione, nè commendata dalla tradizione, si è sempre per l' istesso motivo, perchè tale istituzione era stata fatta senza l' autorita della Sede Apostolica, al cui giudizio per altro intieramente sottoponeva questa e qualsivoglia altra sua opinione: «Romanae praestertim Ec«clesiae auctoritati atque examini totum, sicut et cetera, quae «huiusmodi sunt, universa reservo.»

È Probabile che nella sua Lettera ai Canonici Lionesi il Santo Abbia parlato della concezione attiva, e non della passiva.

34. Del resto non manca tra' dotti, che scrissero su questo argomento, chi pensa che il Claravallense, e quando nella

lettera succitata disapprova la festa introdotta della Immacolata Concezione della Vergine, e quando nel *Sermone de Assumptione* soggiunge «Quod si originalem maculam a pa«rentibus traxit, sed minus Ieremia sanctificatam in utero «credere prohibet pietas christiana» intendesse di parlare del suo concepimento attivo, di quello cioè, in cui li santi Genitori della Vergine «opere maritali, (come parlano le scuole) invicem convenientes, praestiterunt ea, quae maxime spe«ctabant ad ipsius corporis formationem, organizationem et «dispositionem ad recipiendam animam rationalem a Deo «infundendam»; e non altrimenti parlar volesse del concepimento passivo, ossia dell'infusion dell'anima, e sua unione col corpo già formato, e debitamente organizzato, il quale concepimento passivo si fa appunto «illo ipso instanti, quo ra«tionalis anima corpori omnibus membris, ac suis organis constanti unitur,» come sin da principio fu da noi osservato. E quelli che sostengono S. Bernardo aver parlato della sola Concezione *attiva* e non già della *passiva,* fondano questa spiegazione sul testo stesso della della lettera del santo Dottore, dove appunto dice: «Unde Conceptionis sanctitas? An «dicitur ante sancta esse, quam esse; siquidem non erat ante«quam conciperetur: an forte inter *amplexus maritales* «sanctitas se ipsi conceptioni immiscuit, ut simul et sanctifi«cata fuerit, et concepta? Ne hoc quidem admittit ratio. «Quomodo enim sanctitas absque spiritu sanctificante? Aut «Sancto Spiritui societas cum peccato fuit? Aut certe pecca«tum quomodo non fuit, ubi libido non defuit? Si igitur ante «conceptum sui sanctificari non potuit, quoniam non erat; «sed nec in ipso quidem conceptu propter peccatum quod «inerat; restat, ut post conceptum in utero iam existens «sanctificationem accepisse credatur, quae excluso peccato «sanctam fecerit nativitatem, non tamen et conceptionem.» Per verità tali parole sembrano assai forti per conchiudere, che dunque il santo Dottore intese parlare non della conce-

zione *passiva,* ma dell'*attiva* soltanto. La quale interpretazione ove fosse ammessa svanirebbe tosto ogni difficoltà, e la dottrina del Mellifluo sarebbe in perfetto accordo colla dottrina nostra.[17]

35. Ed ancorchè questa interpretazione, la quale a noi sembra ragionevole e giusta, non voglia ammettersi, e si voglia invece sostenere col Mabillon che San Bernardo fu a noi contrario; sempre ci si dovrà concedere che esso professava a Maria una tenerissima divozione, che fu egli quant' altri mai acerrimo difensore de' suoi privilegi, e che certo non ebbe mai l'intenzione di detrarre menomamente alla dignità della Madre de Dio. Dunque si dovrà del pari accordare che qualunque abbia potuto essere allora l'opinione del S. Dottore su questo argomento, ove vivesse a giorni nostri, vedendo che la Chiesa stabilì la festa della Concezione di Maria, non solo lo difenderebbe, ma lieto si mostrerebbe, ed oltremodo contento di questo privilegio accordato dal divin Padre alla Santissima Vergine di essere immune dall' originale peccato. E se pria disse l' opinion nostra *superstiziosa,* ora istruito ed illuminato dall' esempio della Romana Chiesa, la direbbe pia, e con noi canterebbe divoto e spontaneo: «*Tota pulchra es Maria, et macula non est in Te.*»

Si libera San Tomaso dall' imputazione di non ammettere l'immacolato concepimento di Maria.
Passi del medesimo che lo favoriscono.

36. Si dee ora vedere qual fosse su questo articolo la vera opinione di un altro gravissimo Dottore, San Tommaso di Aquino, grande luminare della Chiesa di Dio, il quale giustamente il glorioso titolo si meritò di Angelo delle scuole. Si mena alto rumore sull' autorità di questo Santo Dottore,

[17] Si vegga in proposito l' interessante Lessico Polemico del Chiarissimo P. BIONDA Abbate Cisterciense, Tom. 2. *Controversia LXVII, De Epistola S. Bernardi ad Lugdunenses Canonicos,* che similmente defende il S. Padre dall' imputazione datagli di aver impugnata la dottrina dell' Immacolato Concepimento di Maria.

che si vorrebbe far passare come il capo del partito contrario. Ancorchè ciò fosse vero, l'autorità di Lui sarebbe sempre inferiore a quella della Chiesa, che la festa istituì dell' immacolata Concezione di Maria. Ma è egli poi vero che San Tommaso fosse contrario a questo particolar privilegio di Maria? Se ascoltiamo ciò che scrisse nell' Opuscolo 6. *de dilectione Dei et proximi,* dobbiamo inferirne un' illazione ben differente; «Fecit summus artifex, egli dice, in ostensio-«nem pleniorem artis suae speculum unum clarissimo clarius. «Seraphim tersius, ut purius intelligi non posset, nisi Deus «esset, *personam,* scilicet, *gloriosissimae Virginis,* de quo «Anselmus: *decebat illius conceptio hominis de Maria puris-«sima fieret,* ea puritate, quae maior *sub Deo nequit intelligi.*»

37. Nel Libro I. delle *Sentenze* distinct. 44, quaest. 1, artic. 3 scrive cosi: «Puritas intenditur per recessum a con-«trario, et ideo potest aliquid creatum reperiri, quo nihil «purius esse possit in rebus creatis, si nulla contagione pec-«cati infectum sit, et talis fuit puritas B. Virginis quae a «*peccato originali* et actuali immunis fuit. Fuit tamen sub Deo quatenus fuit in potentia ad peccandum.» E qui si osservi che l'Angelico parlando della Vergine non si limita a dire *omni peccato originali, et actuali caruisse,* ciò che si verificò di Geremia, del Battista, e si vede di tutti li fanciulli nata nel peccato, ricevuto che abbiano il battesimo che ne lo cancellò; ma di Lei dice, che *ab omni peccato originali et actuali* IMMUNIS FUIT. Ora se Maria, secondo San Tommaso fu immune dal peccato originale; dunque secondo San Tommaso nol contrasse mai: conciossiachè se contratto una volta lo avesse, comechè per brevissimo istante, dir non si potrebbe che ne fu immune. Il Santo Dottore istituisce infatti un confronto tra la purità di Dio, e quella della Beatissima Vergine dicendo: «*quod nec Deus, nec Beatissima «Virgo unquam peccaverint*»; con questa differenza però, che

Iddio per natura, la Vergine per privilegio fu immune da colpa.

38. Ciò nondimeno la parte contraria adduce ben quindici passi, dai quali apparirebbe che l' Angelico fosse avverso all' immacolato concepimento di Maria. Tali passi sono tolti in gran parte dal Libro 3 e 4 delle sentenze, do'suoi *Quodlibeti*, dai commenti sì al Salmo 3, che all' Apocalisse, e finalmente dalla Somma,[18] nei quali luoghi si asserisce che «*Virgo Beata in originali peccato fuit concepta.*»

Libri del Santo Dottore in alcuni luoghi alterati.

39. Or come conciliare San Tommaso con San Tommaso; come spiegare che egli sull' istesso argomento abbia insegnato due dottrine affatto tra loro opposte, l' una cioè favorevole all' immacolato concepimento di Maria, l' altra contraria? Forse ritrattò egli la prima quando passò a sostener la seconda? Non mai. Forse si è egli contraddetto, ovvero quando disse che Maria avea contratto il peccato di origine, si dimenticò che l' avea prima asserita immune da tal peccato? Ma il contraddirsi non era il carattere di un Dottore, quale fu l'Angelico, profondamente filosofo, le cui opere sono tutte mirabilmente collegate insieme, e che in tutte pure si mostra sempre coerente a se stesso. Come dunque spiegare questo mistero senza ledere l' onore, e indebolire l' autorità del S. Dottore? Il mistero però cesserà se s' istituisca il confronto tra le antiche e moderne edizioni delle Opere di un tanto Dottore, e se si dirà francamente che talune di esse, e quelle segnatamente, nelle quali si parla della Concezione di Maria, subirono dove delle soppressioni, e dove delle evidenti alterazioni. E di questo ci rendono amplissima ed autorevole testimonianza dottissimi ed integerrimi Scrittori del chiarissimo Ordine Domenicano. Citeremo qui li principali. Il Vescovo Wielmo nel suo Libro *Pro defensione Sancti Thomae:* parla così: «Execrabilius est, quod nequam et

[18] 3. part. quaest. 27. a 1. seq.

«scelesti homines quidam vel ad Thomae auctoritatem en-«ervandam, vel, ut ego quidem arbitror, ad suam aliquam «opinionem, quae in controversiam vertebatur, tanti viri «testimoniis fulciendam, et comprobandam egerunt.» Egidio romano che dell' Angelico fu intimo e divoto discepolo, pochi anni dopo la morte del Santo compose un Libro intitolato «*Castigatorium in Corruptorem Librorum Thomae «Aquinatis.*» Anche Riccardo Klapoel, Erveo Natali, Guglielmo Messelech, Giovanni di Parigi, Guglielmo Bollionio, Nicolao Madense, il Durandello, e l' Arcivescovo Ugone, tutti membri del Sacro Istituto Domenicano scrissero vigorosamente contro li Corruttori degli scritti di S. Tommaso. Giovanni Nicolai poi nel suo Prologo all' edizione delle Opere del S. Dottore fatta in Parigi nel 1663 attesta e dichiara «se textum Summae Divi Thomae non a Typo-«graphicis tantum corruptelis expurgasse, sed maxime ab «affectatis, ac industria et studio relictis, quae legitimum sen-«sum, vel historicam sinceritatem, veritatemque perverterent; «hiatus quoque plures, et lacunas implevisse ad supplendam «seriem textus, quae alioquin nulla erat, ac dubium Lectorem «relinquebat propter non satis plenum sensum, vel in errorem «inducebat propter sensum illegitimum.»

Esempi delle seguite alterazioni.

40. In prova di questa verissima asserzione del dotto Domenicano Nicolai abbiamo il fatto delle antiche edizioni del Commentario al Cap. 3. dell' epistola di S. Paolo ai Galati, nelle quali S. Tommaso dice: «Mulieren ex omnibus non «inveni, quae a peccato omnino immunis esset ad minus ori-«ginis, vel veniali; excipitur purissima, et omni laude dignis-«sima Virgo Maria, quae omnino immunis fuit a peccato ori-«ginali et veniali»; la quale eccezione cosi limpida e chiara del S. Dottore non si legge nelle posteriori edizioni, quelle, cioè, che ora circolano, e sono nelle mani degli studiosi. Cosi nelle odierne edizioni della Somma 3. p. quaest. 27. art. 2. si fa dire

all' Angelico, «nec ante animationem, nec in animatione, sed «post animationem sanctificatam, et a peccato originali mun- «datam fuisse,» mentre nel Codice Ispalense, in quello che si conservava nel Convento de' Domenciani di Marsiglia, ed in altri, nel luoge citato tali parole non vi si leggono affatto; il che è tanto vero, che il Domenicano Bromiardo[19] citando il passo testè riferito non ebbe difficoltà di asserire, che «Sanc- «tus Thomas (3. part. quaest. 27. art. 2.) ponit eius sanctifi- «cationis excellentiam, quantum ad temporis prioritatem, in «hoc, quod sanctificata fuit in sui animatione, idest, in con- «iunctione animae cum corpore in utero matris suae»; il che significa che Maria fu immacolata nel passivo suo concepimento, ossia che l'anima sua prevenuta dalla grazia santificante fu immune dall' originale peccato.

41. Finalmente per non istar quì a citare tutti i luoghi nei quali si rincontrano suppressioni, od alterazioni operate nel testo del S. Dottore, ce ne offre un esempio anche l'Opuscolo IV *de salutatione Angelica,* dove il Santo giusta la testimonianza del Salmerone, e Pietro Canisio, dice, che Maria fu «purissima quantum ad omnem culpam quia nec originale, nec «veniale peccatum aliquando incurrit»; le quali parole dalle recenti edizioni furono tolte.

Se dunque nelle Opere del S. Dottore vi sono de'luoghi, e questi non sospetti, favorevoli alla nostra dottrina; e se altri alla medesima contrari si provano dissimili dall' antico e genuino testo del medesimo, e perciò mutilati, alterati e guasti, le regole stesse della buona critica esigono che si stia a' primi, e non ai secondi, e che da quelli, non da questi la vera mente si argomenti dell' Aquinate.

42. E ciò tanto più si dee fare in quanto che ha egli stesso stabiliti li principii per dimostrare che Maria nel suo felice concepimento andò immune dall' original reato. Infatti in-

[19] In summa preedicantium *Verbo Maria* art. 2. n 10.

segnò l'Angelico *non posse festum celebrari nisi de sancto:* ma la Chiesa celebra la festa della immacolata Concezion di Maria; dunque il di Lei concepimento fu santo. Egli pure insegnò e scrisse: *dubitari non posse Beatissimam Virginem sine peccato originali natam esse, quia Ecclesia eius nativitatem celebrat:* ma la Chiesa celebra e solennizza con festa di precetto anche la Concezion di Maria; dunque secondo San Tommaso dubitare non si può che Maria sia stata concepita senza l'original peccato. Dunque se non si vuol supporre (e la supposizione sarebbe affatto mal fondata ed ingiusta) che l'Angelico abbia voluto mettersi in contraddizione co'suoi stessi pricipii, si dee ragionevolmente conchiudere che ove vivesse adesso, vedendo il consenso di tutta la Chiesa nell' l'onorare, festeggiare, e venerare il concepimento della Madre di Dio come immacolato, egli pure adotterebbe non solo, ma difenderebbe altresì colla solidità e felicità del suo profondissimo ingegno la stessa dottrina che noi sosteniamo. Lo afferma positivamente un gran luminare della scuola Tommistica, Giovanni da San Tommaso, il quale nella prima parte, distinzione seconda sulla dottrina di San Tommaso, articolo secondo, scrive così: «Postquam Ecclesia Romana cele-«brat festum Conceptionis, loquendo in vi doctrinae D. «Thomae, oportet viceversa de his sententiis censere, et sic «Divus Thomas censeret.» Chi amasse di avere maggiori notizie sulla dottrina di S. Tommaso intorno alla presente quistione portrà leggere l'egregia Opera del Cardinal Sfondrati che ha per titolo: *Innocentia vindicata,* nella quale il dotto Autore si propose di dimostrare con argomenti tirati tutti dall'Angelo delle scuole l'immacolato concepimento di Maria. A noi basterà di concludere che dunque il Santo Dottore non è contrario alla sentenza nostra, che è in fondo la sentenza della Chiesa; mentre insegnò dottrina, e stabilì principii che la sostengono e la dimostrano.

Dottrina de' Teologi sull' argomento.

43. Ci resta per ultimo di vedore quale sia stata su questo punto la dottrina dei Teologi, che son succeduti ai santi padri nella difesa della verità, l' autorità dei quali perciò nelle questioni relative sia alla fede, sia alla ecclesiastica disciplina, è degna al certo di tutto il rispetto.

S. Domenico difensore della nostra dottrina.

44. Noi ne comincieremo la serie dall' eccelso Fondatore dell' inclito Ordine dei Predicatori San Domenico, che fu un grande luminare della Chiesa di Dio. Nella cospicua Città di Barcellona d' antichissimo tempo si conservava (colà probabilmente trasportata da Tolosa) una preziosa tavola, nella quale si riferiscono le dispute che ebbero luogo tra S. Domenico stesso, e gli eretici Albigesi. In questa si legge la seguente genuina e semplice istoria: «Dominicus Sanctus et «gloriosus Pater Ordinis Praedicatorum venit Tolosam pro «Ecclesiae defensione, quam miraculis confirmavit. Albigen«ses affirmabant principaliter tres errores: *primus,* quod Chri«stus non erat ille qui iam dicitur venisse et qui debebat redi«mere genus humanum: *secundus,* quod hostia consecrata non «continebat verum Corpus Cristi: *tertius,* quod sicut Adam formatus fuerat in campo Damasceno ex luto mundo, et non «maculato; sic ille, qui redimere debebat genus humanum «nasci debebat ex virgine non maculata. Sed Virgo quae «dicitur Mater Christi fuit maculata per culpam originalem; «ergo natus ex tali Virgine non est ille qui debebat mundum «redimere. Contra quos errores Sanctus Dominicus fecit «quemdam libellum de Corpore Christi, affirmando quod «Christus redemit genus humanum, et firmissima veritate «confitendo, Christum natum de Virgine immaculata, et Albi«genses furiose insurgendo contra ipsum B. Dominicum dice«bant quod illa Virgo concepta fuit in peccato originali; et B. «Dominicus, prout continetur in suo libello, respondebat, «quod non erat verum quod dicebant quoniam Virgo Maria

«est illa, de qua Spiritus Sanctus per Salomonem dicit: Tota «pulchra es amica mea, et macula non est in te. Finaliter exi- «stentes haeretici in eorum erronea intentione, venerunt ad «miraculi experentiam, videlicet, quod B. Dominicus proiice- «ret libellum suum in quodam furno ardente, et si ibi non «combureretur, crederent: et B. Dominicus proiecit illum in «furno ardente, et libellus inustus exivit.» Di questo miracolo fanno menzione Pietro Canisio Lib. I *de Deipara* cap. 7; il Salmeron nel suo Commento *in Epist. ad Roman.;* ed il Cisterciense Pietro di Valle nella sua Storia degli Albigesi cap. 7. Il Gotiscalco poi, che visse prima di Sisto IV *Sermone de Concept. B. Virginis* afferma, e sostiene che S. Domenico nel summentovato libro contro gli Albigesi difese l'immunità, ossia l'esenzione di Maria dal peccato originale. Parlano di un tal libro di S. Domenico il Suarez 3 p. q. 27, D. 3. sect. 15; il Vasquez dist. 17, ed altri. Nel medesimo il Santo si esprime così: «Sicut primus Adam fuit ex terra virgine, et «numquam maledicta formatus; ita decuit in secundo Adam «fieri.»

Dal documento pertanto testè recitato (la cui autenticità non può mettersi in dubbio) sembra dimostrato, che il glorioso S. Domenico professò al par di noi la dottrina sulla immunità di Maria dal peccato originale, ch' è quanto dire il suo immacolato concepimento.

San Vincenzo Ferreri difese la nostra dottrina.

45. Di S. Vincenzo Ferreri che fiorì nel decimo quinto secolo (1419) si dice, e si ripete a piena bocca, che fu avverso alla nostra dottrina. Ma quelli che così la pensano probabilmente non si sono mai imbattuti a leggere il di lui sermone 2 *de nativitate,* dove il Santo di Maria parla così: «Non credatis «quia fuerit sicut in nobis, qui in peccatis concipimur; sed «statim ac anima fuit creata, fuit sanctificata, et statim An- «geli in Coelo celebrarunt Festum Conceptionis.» L'istesso Santo in altro sermone intitolato *de B. Virginis Conceptione*

dice, «*de nullo Sancto fit festum conceptionis, nisi Christi, et «Virginis.*» Ora se secondo la dottrina giustissima dell'Angelico non si celebra la festa che dei Santi, e se giusta l'asserzion verissima del Ferrerio non di altri Beati, ma la festività soltanto si celebra della Concezion di Cristo, e di Maria; dunque secondo il medesimo la Concezione di Maria fu immune dal reato di origine: altrimenti non potrebbe dirsi santa, e non ne sarebbe stata istituita la festa. Finalmente in una nota apposta sul margine di un Codice contenente la Somma di San Tommaso ad 3 p. q. 27, art. 2 ad 3. si leggono queste parole scritte di propria mano del Ferrerio: «*Virgo fuit im-«munis a peccato originali et actuali.*» Questo Codice, come ce lo attesta il Cardinale Sfondrati, si conservava prima delle attuali disastrose calamità della Spagna, nel Convento di S. Domenico della Città di Alcaniz. Io non so cosa possa desiderarsi di più per conchiudere che dunque San Vincenzo Ferreri sosteneva esso pure Maria essere stata concepita senza il menomo neo della colpa di origine.

Così opinò pure Alberto Magno.

46. Alberto Magno, che come ognun sa fu precettore di S. Tommaso, nel suo libro *de Laudibus Virginis* sopra la parola *Missus*, «*Haec Virgo sola*, dice, *a communi illa regula excipi-«tur: omnes in Adam peccaverunt.*» E nella Bibbia Mariana sopra il Vangelo di S. Luca soggiunge: «Vae culpae est tri-«plex, scilicet, originalis, mortalis et venialis: porro sine isto «triplici vae fuit Beatissima Virgo Maria.» Nè si dica con tali parole Alberto Magno aver voluto indicare Maria essere stata mondata dal peccato originale, non che non l' abbia contratto: imperciocchè parlando egli in egual modo del peccato originale e del peccato attuale, ne segue che come la Vergine non incorse mai colpa attuale, così neanche dee aver incorsa la colpa originale. Vero è che il medesimo in altri luoghi sembra negare l' immacolato concepimento di Maria; ma o

convien dire che abbia sull' argomento cambiato parere, o più probabilmente che qualche fanatico partigiano della contraria dottrina, ne abbia alterati gli scritti, come avvenne delle Opere di S. Tommaso, secondo che fu già da noi dimostrato.

Giovanni da Viterbo d'impugnatore divenuto difensore della pia sentenza. Causa di questo cangiamento.

47. Di Giovanni da Viterbo parimente Domenicano scrive il Rainaudo Tom 8 *in Tractatus de Pielate, Lugdun.* «Io-«annes de Viterbio opus integrum conscripsit de immaculata «Conceptione, cuius hunc breviculum reperio; nam opus in-«tegrum non vidi. Probat Auctor, quod Virginis conceptus «fuit immaculatus, eo quod summa animae infamia est con-«cipi in ira Dei, in tenebris culpae, et iniquitatibus. Quod B. «Thomae, ac veri Ordinis Praedicatorum propria opinio est «B. Virginem ne pro instanti quidem subiacuisse irae Dei. «Quod cum Christus maluerit homines de suo ortu quam de «fama Matris dubitare eligens nasci ex coniugata, ut notat S. «Ambrosius, contra Christi voluntatem facere, qui pertinaci-«ter, et adhibitis falsiloquiis maculatam conceptionem adstrue-«re conantur.» L' istesso Autore ci fa sapere (luogo citato) che il Viterbese Giovanni era prima accerrimo impugnatore della dottrina favorevole all' immacolato concepimento di Maria, ma che per gravissima malattia essendo vicino alla morte, forse pentito dell' opinion pria sostenuta, a Maria rivolto facesse questo voto: «O B. Virgo Maria, si verum est «quod sine peccati macula concepta fuisti, rogo mihi sanita-«tem donare digneris in signum tuae puritatis, et ego voveo «toto tempore vitae meae celebrare festum Conceptionis, et «annuntiare populis innocentiam tuam, et retractare quidquid «in contrarium praedicavi.» Pronunciato il voto, la grazia della guarigione non si fece attendere, e radunato il popolo col solito segno della campana tosto imprese a predicare, e a difendere la dottrina dell' immacolato concepimento di Maria.

Conseguenze che discendono da tal Documento.

48. Da questo prezioso documento si deducono due importantissime conseguenze; la prima è che l'opinion vera e propria di S. Tommaso, e dell' Ordine de' Predicatori si fu questa, cioè: *B. Virginem ne pro istanti quidem subiacuisse irae Dei;* l'altra, che invocata Maria da Giovanni da Viterbo a far conoscere col richiesto prodigio se senza l' ombra minima di colpa fosse stata concepita, Ella vi corrispose coll' immediata, perfetta, e constante guarigione da mortal malattia di lui che ne l' avea di ciò richiesta.

Opinione del Taulero, di Catterino, di Melchior Cano, e di Natale Alessandro.

49. Il Taulero Religioso veramente insigne tanto per la pietà, come per la copia di sua dottrina, serm. 1. *de purificatione* dice: «B. Virgo culpae originalis perpetuo expers «fuit, a qua illam praeservavit filius eius, ita ut ne momento «quidem temporis filia irae fuerit.» A questi fanno eco «Ludovico Bertramo, il Lanuza, il Catalan, il Cassali, il Beato Iacopo da Varagine Già Arcivescovo di Genova, il quale scrisse due Istorie in favore dell' Immacolata Concezione di Maria, e ci riferì li miracoli da Dio operati in conferma di questa dottrina, il celebre Catterino nel suo Opusculo in favor dell' Immacolata Concezion di Maria; e Melchior Cano che dopo aver numerato quelli, che hanno opinato essere stata la Vergine Santissima concepita nella macchia originale, conchiude dicendo: «Quin potius contraria sententia, «et probabiliter, et pie in Ecclesia defenditur.»[20]

A questi per ultimo si dee aggiungere il celebre Natale Alessansandro, il quale[21] all' autorità de' Padri che dalli sostenitori della parte contraria sogliono prodursi in conferma della medesima, risponde dicendo: «Antiqui Patres, quos «Augustinus adversus Pelagianos in aciem educit, et Au-

[20] De *Auctoritate Sanctorum lib.* 7, c. 6.
[21] Tom. 2 ad Saeculum 13 et 14 dissert. 16, § 20.

«gustinus ipse de peccati originalis debito, facile exponi pos-«sunt; cum enim ex Adamo B. Virgo propagata fuerit, com-«muni lege peccati originalis contrahendi tenebatur, illudque «reipsa contraxisset, nisi singulari Redemptoris servata «fuisset beneficio.» E poi soggiunge: «sententiam de im-«maculata Conceptione non solum ut probabilem et piam, «sed ut propriam facultatis nostrae Parisiensis doctrinam «propugnabimus, si de ea dicendi scribendive detur occasio.»

Giudizio di Vincenzo Giustiniani.

50. E poichè saria cosa troppo lunga il citar qui li nomi di tutti li Teologi Domenicani, i quali professarono e difesero la sentenza dell' immunità di Maria dall' originale peccato; tralasciando altri, ci limiteremo a riferire ciò che sull' argomento scrisse il dotto ed accurato Vincenzo Giustiniani nelle aggiunte alla vita del Beato Ludivico Bertrando.[22] Eccone le parole: «Iam in Hispania, in Indiis, in Gallia, et «in tota pene Europa contra piam opinionem aut scribere, «aut docere, aut concionari velle, cum nihil aliud fuerit quam «male canere, et in malo cantu durare, et occasionem dare «ne illud Terentii eis occinatur: frustra niti, et laborando «nihil aliud quam odium quaerere extremae dementiae est; «magnae prudentiae fuerit eam opinionem omnino deserere, «quemadmodum ii qui collabentem iamiam domum vident «(quod de muribus Plinius scribit) fuga se subducunt. Iam «illis desunt Cathedrae, Suggesta, Confessionalia, Libri. Iam «Regum diademata, iam Episcoporum Mitrae, iam Cardina-«lium Galeri, iam Pontificum Tiarae, et ipsamet Concilia, «quando Tridentinum omnino protestatum est non esse «suae intentionis in decreto de peccato originali Deiparam «comprehendere.»

Testimonianze favorevoli.

51. Abbiamo poi più Santi insigni anche per dottrina, i quali apertamente professarono, e cogli scritti loro sosten-

[22] Cap. 3. § 18.

nero la pia sentenza dell' Immacolato Concepimento della nostra celeste Regina.

Di S. Bernardino da siena.

San Bernardino da Siena nel suo Sermone 49. «Non enim, «dice, credendum est, quod ipse Filius Dei voluerit nasci «ex Virgine, et sumere eius carnem, quae esset maculata «aliquo originali peccato.»

L'intiero Ordine Francescano difende con particolare ardore la medesima dottrina.

Di S. Brunone.

S. Brunone Fondatore del contemplativo Ordine Certosino nel suo Commentario al Salmo 101 così parla di Maria: «Hace est incorrupta terra illa cui benedixit Dominus; ab «omni propterea peccati contagione libera.»

Di S. Lorenzo Giustiniani.

S. Lorenzo Giustiniani in un Sermone pronunziato nel dì dell'Annunziazione al Popolo Veneto asseriva che la gran Vergine «ab ipsa conceptione fuit in benedictionibus prae- «venta.»

Di S. Tommaso da Villanova.

Il dotto S. Tommaso da Villanova Arcivescovo di Valenza nelle Spagne, *Conc. 3. de Nativit. Virg. Mariae* «Decuit, dice, «Matrem Dei esse purissimam sine labe, sine peccato. Unde «non solum quando puella sanctissima, et in utero sanctis- «sima, et in *Conceptione* sanctissima.» E ne dà la ragione, conciossiachè soggiunge: « Non enim decebat Sanctuarium «Dei, Domum Sapientiae, Reliquiarium Spiritus, Urnam «Mannae Coelestis aliquam in se labem habere. Propter «quod antequam anima illa sanctissima infunderetur, plene «fuit caro illa mundata ab omni faece, et labe; et anima cum «infusa est nullam habuit ex carne, neque contraxit labem «peccati.»

Di S. Alfonso de Liguori.

Finalmente Sant' Alfonso de Liguori, per tacere di altri, in più luoghi delle sue opere, e più particolarmente nel suo libro *sulle glorie di Maria,* sostenne con tutto l'impegno la nostra sentenza, e dimostrò con varie ragioni esser' Ella stata preservata dalla macchia di origine, perchè dice: «così con- «venne all' Eterno Padre per essere Maria sua Figlia, e «Figlia primogenita; così convenne al Divin Figlio per esser «Maria sua Madre; così convenne allo Spirito Santo per «esser Maria sua Sposa.»[23]

Li Teologi del secolo XIII e XIV, ad eccezion di pochi, difesero con ardore la nostra dottrina.

52. Ripigliando ora la serie de'Teologi, si può asserire senza tema di errare, che dal secolo XIII in cui principiò nelle scuole ad agitarsi la questione sull' Immacolato Concepimento di Maria, fino al secolo XV la nostra sentenza ebbe invittissimi difensori, tra' quali Giovanni Dunz, Pietro Aureolo, Francesco de Mayronis, Giovanni Bassoli, Guglielmo de Rubione, Pietro de Aquila Scotello, Tommaso de Argentina, Francesco Martini, Pietro di Alliaco, Giovanni Charlier

[23] Tra i Santi che si pronunziarono solennemente in favore della nostra Causa dee annoverarsi anche S. Brigida versatissima nella scienza delle divine cose. perchè in esse ammaestrata da Gesù Cristo medesimo, e le cui Rivelazioni perciò, giusta il sentimento del dotto Cardinale Turrecremata, meritano una pienissima fede. Ora la Santa in una delle sue Rivelazioni (Lib. 6, Cap. 49) fa così parlare la Santissima Vergine: "Veritas est, quod concepta fui sine peccato originali, quia sicut Filius meus, et Ego nunquam peccavimus, ita nullum coniugium, fuit, quod honestius esset, quam illud, de quo processi." Ed essendo stata un giorno interrogata da un Uomo dotto, di cui non si palesa il nome, sull' argomento appunto dell' immacolato Concepimento di Maria, tosto rispose: "Si Matri placuerit misericordiae interrogabo eam super hac re, et quidquid mihi responderit, indicabo tibi." Santa Brigida eseguì fedelmente la fatta promessa; giacchè rapita quindi in una soavissima Estasi, chiese a Maria di farle conoscere cosa risponder dovesse a chi l'avea sull' argomento interrogata, e la Vergine tosto le disse: "Crede, filia, quoniam recte sentiunt omnes, qui me praeservatam ab originali macula et credunt, et confitentur. Male autem qui contrarium sentiunt, praesertim cum temeritate." Le Rivelazioni di Santa Brigida sono state dichiarate autentiche, ed approvate da tre Sommi Pontefici, Urbano VI, Gregorio IX, e Martino V. Il secundo, cioè Gregorio IX, dopo averle fatte diligentemente esaminare da dottissimi Cardinali, da piu Vescovi, e da ripotati e valenti Teologi, non ebbe difficoltà di pronunciare, che *totum quod in eis continetur, et veritate conspicuum est, et Sanctitate pleum, pellucidum atque perfectum.* Si legga, se piace, il Cardinale Turrecremata *in Prologo defens. earundem Revelationum,* e vi troverà la piu valida, e robusta difesa delle medesime. Ne tratta anche il Tritemio in Chron. Stirsaugiensi an. 1369.

Gersoni, Giovanni di Segovia, Alfonso Tostato, Nicola Cusano, Guglielmo Verilungo, Nicola Orbello, Dionigi Richel Certosino, Giacomo da Valenza, Gabriele Biel, Perbarto di Temesvar, Ambrogio Spiera, Marsilio d'Inghen, Giovanni Tritemio, l'Henriquez, il Comitolo, il Vasquez, il Pinsanno, il Salmerone, ed altri molti.

53. Anche la sentenza contraria ebbe i suoi Avvocati, ma questi per autorità, e per numero sono di gran lunga inferiori ai primi, contandosene soli cinque, che possono riguardarsi come i principali di quella schiera, cioè Egidio Colonna, Enrico di Gand, Durando da San Porziano, Alvaro Pelagio, e Gregorio di Rimini.

54. Dal secolo XV poi sino a dì nostri, ad eccezione di pochi, non si trovano Teologi di qualche nome, i quali non abbiano sostenuto l' Immacolato Concepimento di Maria. Degli Ordini Regolari si disse altrove che lo difendono con particolar fervore e pietà. Tra questi risplende l'illustre e tanto benemerita Compagnia di Gesù, della quale afferma il P. Giorgi, *adnot. in Commentarium Mariani Partehii de vita et studiis Hieronymi Lagomarsini,* che li membri di essa *semper et ubique* difesero questo singolar privilegio di Maria. Noi ci contenteremo di citarne tre soli che sono i più rinomati, ed esprimono l'opinione di tutti.

Autorità del Suarez.

55. L'esimio Padre Suarez in 3 part. Divi Thomae, Tom. 2, quaest. 27, art. 2, disput. 3, sect. 5, dimostra valorosamente, come Maria essendo stata prescelta a divenire Madre di Dio, perciò stesso dovea essere esente dalla legge del peccato: «Dat enim Deus, egli dice, unicuique gratiam eo tem-«pore, modo et perfectione, quo secundum rectam et pru-«dentem rationem maxime congruit fini, dignitati et officio, «in quo ab ipso Deo constituitur: sed prima dignitas Vir-«ginis fuit esse Matrem Dei, quo titulo illi debetur maximus «amor et honor et cum hac coniuncta est alia, scilicet sin-

«gulari modo cooperari redemptioni; cui fini nihil potest esse «magis contrarium, quam peccatum. Et ex his sequitur ut «singulari modo sit Domina omnium, et Regina Angelorum. «Nam (ut recte dixit Anselmus), sicut Deus omnia creando «Pater est, et Dominus omnium; ita *Beata Virgo suis meritis «cuncta reparando Mater est et Domina rerum:* non decebat «autem Dominam esse inferiorem servis, scilicet sanctis An«gelis, in perpetua sanctitate, et vitae innocentia, ac puritate.» Quindi rinforza l' argomento dicendo: «Nullum gratiae bene«ficium alicui purae creaturae collatum, Virgini negatum est: «sed creari in gratia est magnum gratiae beneficium, quod «Adae et Hevae collatum est, et perfecta innocentia ex«cludens omnem culpam communicata est Angelis: ergo «utrumque multo perfectius concessum est Virgini.» E alla singolarità del privilegio da taluni obbiettata così vittoriosamente risponde: «Nec refert quod gratia praeservans a pec«cato statim contrahendo nulli concessa sit; tum quia hinc fit «Virginem magis indiguisse hoc beneficio quam ceteros, ideo«que potiori iure atque ratione illi fuisse tribuendum; tum «etiam quia nihil mirum est, quod aliquid maius Matri quam «ceteris concedat.»

Il Suarez adunque, che fu pure seguace ed interprete esimio della dottrina dell' Angelico, sostenne e difese l' Immacolato Concepimento di Maria nel senso da noi indicàto.

Del Petavio.

56. Ora ascoltiamo il Petavio. Questo insigne e profondo Teologo, versatissimo nello studio de' santi Padri, nella sua applauditissima Opera che ha per titolo: Theolog. Dogmat. lib. 14, cap. 2, N. 10. persuaso della verità della nostra dottrina per la copia degli argomenti tratti principalmente dalla Tradizione che la dimostrano, e mosso fortemente dall' unanime ed universal consenso de' fedeli nell' abbracciarla, ne parla così: «Movet autem me ut in eam sim partem pro«pensior, communis maxime sensus fidelium omnium, qui

«hoc intimis mentibus, alteque defixum habent, et quibus «possunt indiciis, officiisque testantur, nihil illa Virgine castius, «purius, innocentius, alienius denique ab omni sorde et labe «peccati procreatum a Deo fuisse; tum vero nihil cum inferis «et horum rectore diabolo, adeoque cum qualicumque Dei «offensa, et damnatione commune unquam fuisse.»

Di Cornelio a Lapide.

57. Non meno chiaramente si pronuncia a favore della nostra sentenza Cornelio a Lapide,[24] il quale sull' autorita del Suarez, del Canisio, del dotto Sebastiano Barradi, e di altri, non dubita di affermare essere comune tra fedeli la credenza che Maria sia stata preservata dall' original peccato. E ne dà la ragione, perchè soggiunge, «Haec omnimoda puritas dece- «bat Matrem Dei. Quis enim credat Matrem Dei aliquando «fuisse servam peccati et filiam Diaboli?» E poi conchiude «Ipsa ergo *in Conceptione integram sanctitatem,* in Incarna- «tione vero ingens sanctitatis incrementum a Christi sui mai- «estate accepit. Et hoc significat vox *splendebat,* pro qua «vertunt septuaginta ἐξέλαμπεν ὡς φέγγος; idest resplende- «bat quasi fulgor, quasi Beata Virgo concipiens Christum, ab «eo illustrem Sanctitatis splendorem et fulgorem accepit, quae «*in primo sui conceptu* eiusdem nitorem acceperat, ut iam «miro splendore fulgerat, imo fulguraret quae ante plane «nitebat et fulgebat.»

Il Card. Bellarmino favorevole alla pia sentenza dell'esenzion di Maria dalla macchia di origine.

58. Quanto al Bellarmino, sebbene non abbia egli scritto alcun libro particolare in difesa di questo bel privilegio di Maria, perchè forse gliene mancò l'occasione; pure nelle sue controversie (Tom. 2, Lib. 3, cap. 16) apertamente dice e dichiara: «In maiori parte Ecclesiae pie credi Beatam Vir- «ginem sine peccato originali conceptam:» e soggiunge, «quod «etiam ex adversariis fatentur Lutherus et Erasmus, ille in

[24] In Mzechiel. Prophet. cap. XLIII.

«sermone *de festo Conceptionis,* iste, in Apologia ad Alber-«tum Pium Carpensem.» Ed il Cardinale Sfondrati ci attesta che nell' anno 1617 in una Congregazione di Cardinali tenutasi alla presenza del S. Pontefice Pio V per discutere la causa della Concezion di Maria, il piissimo Porporato opinò in favore dell'esenzione di Lei dal reato di origine, la quale opinione dimostrò fondata e vera anche coll' autorità de' miracoli, narrando fra gli altri questo, cioè, che: «Naves, «quae signo immaculatae Conceptionis caruere, naufragio «sepultae sunt, illis tantum feliciter appulsis, quibus Im-«maculatae Virginis Imago pro Castoribus fuit.» Ill Bellarmino pertanto quando ebbe occasione di parlare di questo eccelso privilegio di Maria non si tacque, ma lo ammise apertamente e difese.

Testimonianza del Barradi.

59. E poichè abbiamo di sopra nominato il celebre Sebastiano Barradi, ci sia permesso di qui esporre la testimonianza ben anche di questo Autore che è di sommo peso. Egli[25] considerando quelle parole dell' Ecclesiastico «*in plenitudine Sanctorum detentio mea*» che la Chiesa nella sua Liturgia applica alla Santissima Virgine, scrive così: Beatae Virginis laus plenitudinem, in qua gradum figat, «non habet, «nisi dicamus, ultra sanctorum omnium merita concessa illi «fuisse *ab originali peccato* immunitatem. In hac assertione «sita est Sanctorum plenitudo in qua detinetur. In plenitu-«dine Sanctorum detentio mea.» Certo non si poteva dire niente di più chiaro e di più preciso per conchiudere che dunque fu concessa a Maria l'esenzione dal contrarre nel suo concepimento il peccato originale.

Il P. Corio difensore egregio della pia sentenza.

60. Fra Teologi Barnabiti che scrissero, e pubblicarono libri in lode di Maria; merita di essere particolarmente nominato

[25] In Cant. Moysis Lect. 3, Sect. 8, adnot. 6.

il dotto Padre D. Aimone Corio. Questo Religioso di grande riputazione presso i sommi Pontefici Alessandro VII e Clemente IX ne' suoi Commentari sul Pentateuco insegnò e sostenne, dovunque l' occasione gli si presentasse, la pia sentenza dell' Immacolato Concepimento della Santissima Vergine a tale che il Padre Meazza Teatino n'estrasse le sentenze per comporre il Diario dell'Immacolata Concezione riferito dal Vezzosi alla pagina 51 del Tomo 2 degli *Scrittori Teatini.*

Il Card. Gerdil professò egualmente la stessa dottrina.

Questa fu pure la dottrina dell'immortale Cardinal Gerdil, come lo attestano le sue *osservazioni e note* all'Opera dell'illustre Vescovo di Arezzo Monsignore Albergotti intitolata *la via della Santità,* riportate sulla fine della medesima. Il dotto Porporato sentiva poi tale zelo per la propagazione di questa pia sentenza che a sua istanza nelle seconde Lezioni dell' Ufficio di S. Massimo per Decreto della Sagra Congregazione de' Riti ove di già si leggeva: «atque ad augendam «erga Dieparam Religionem, cuius eximius cultor semper fuit, «eius Virginitatem atque maternitatem luculenter asseruit;» si aggiunse il noto passo del Santo Padre già da noi altrove riferito, «*eamque idoneum plane Christo habitaculum, non pro «habitu corporis, sed pro gratia originali praedicavit.*»

Anche le Università tutte l' abbracciarono.

61. Ai Teologi fecero eco in ogni tempo le Università più celebri dell' Orbe Cattolico, quelle cioè di Parigi, di Colonia, di Magonza, di Alcalà, di Saragozza, di Compostella, di Granata, di Toledo, non che le Accademie della Germania, dell' Italia, del Belgio, della Spagna, del Portogallo, per cui può dirsi, non esservi quasi Istituto Teologico in alcuna parte del mondo, il quale non siasi proposto lo scopo santissimo di sostenere, e difendere la Concezione Immacolata di Maria.

Papi e Vescovi, Monarchi e Popoli favorevoli alla pia sentenza.

62. Nè li Teologi soli, o le sole Accademie ed Università Cattoliche, ma Pontefici Massimi, come si è a suo luogo veduto, dottissimi Vescovi, Monarchi e popoli, per non parlare degli Ordini Religiosi, de' quali si disse altrove, manifestarono il lor favore per l' opinione della Immacolata Concezion di Maria. E quanto ai Vescovi basti sapere che quasi tutto il Corpo Episcopale del Cattolico Regno allora fiorentissimo delle Spagne, inviò rispettose e fervide suppliche al Duodecimo Clemente per ottenere che la Sede Apostolica si degnasse definire come verità di fede lo Immacolato Concepimento di Maria. Ci dà notizia di questo fatto l' erudito Padre Giorgi Gesuita, di cui a noi piace riferire qui l' importante racconto collo sue stesse parole. Egli dunque nelle sue annotazioni alla vita del Lagomarsini scritta dal Padre Massolari scrive cosi: «Facere hoc loco non possum, (parlava in tal «luogo del P. Budrolio altro egregio difensore della causa di «Maria) quin humanissimos lectores felicissimi cuiusdam «eventus, qui dum haec scribo mirifica me voluptate cumu«lavit, certiores faciam, quo ad B. Virginis purissimum con«ceptum tuendum, venerandumque ardentiori studio semper «incumbat. Insperanti enim mihi contigit, ut dum neglectam «quamdam, sordibusque obsitam scriptorum molem apud in«famae sortis familiam evolverem, in scriptum volumen in«ciderem exaratum a Ludovico Andrutio, aliis editis iam «operibus de catholica fide egregie merito, quo Deiparae pu«rissimum conceptum tueri sibi proposuerat, statueratque «illud in lucem emittere, si diutius vivere contigisset. Tum «duo alia reperta volumina quibus autographae litterae om«nium totius fere Hispaniae Episcoporum, Academiarum. «Religiosorum Ordinum continebantur, quibus Clementem «XII P. M. enixe rogabant, ut solemni ex Cathedra iudicio «Deiparae sine ulla labe conceptum assereret, ut de singulari «hoc Virginis ornamento, non iam privato sensu pro arbitrio

«suo iudicare quis posset, sed ut de re Ecclesiae firmissimo «iudicio definita, nefas esse duceret contrarie sentire. Qui- «bus profecto testimoniis cum non solum validissimum opti- «mae causae parari praesidium agnoscerem, sed novum pro «Pontifice, cum ex Cathedra loquitur, fallere et falli nescio «argumentum ex unanimi tot Episcoporum consensione arbi- «trarer, nihil antiquius habui, quam ut de tota re amplissi- «mum Cardinalem Hyacinthum Gerdilium, omni pietatis et «doctrinae laude praestantem, certiorem facerem, enixeque «illum rogarem, ut pro summa in Deiparam, qua praestat «pietate, et pro singulari illa, qua me immerentem benevo- «lentia complectitur, Sanctissimo Ecclesiae Pontifici Pio VII «consilium, quod mihi hac in re capiendum videbatur, expo- «nere non gravaretur, ut quando ex Apostolico Tabulario «haec olim fuisse deprompta volumina dubitari non poterat, «remitti Romam illico iuberet, iusta quadam remuneratione «iis, qui ea hactenus retinuerunt, proposita. Quod cum ille «probasset, tum SS. Pontificis adsensu implorato, sic datis «ad me humanissimis, ut solet, litteris respondit: *Notificai «l' acquisto, a ricupera degli interessantissimi originali anche «per intendere la retribuzione da darsi ec. Il S. Padre ha «sentito con molto piacere la ricupera de' menzionati origi- «nali.*» Roma li 21. Aprile 1801. G Card. Gerdil. Fin qui il Giorgi.

Il Consenso comune de' fedeli dimostra vera la sentenza che dichiara Maria esente dalla colpa originale.

63. Certo il voto unanime di tanti e così rispettabili Prelati, ed il pieno consenso del cattolico gregge hanno un peso sì forte nelle bilancie dell' istessa sana critica, da giustificare non solo, ma da canonizzare ben anche in certo modo l' opinione nostra. Questo modo di giudicare noi lo abbiamo imparato dal grande Agostino, di cui seguiamo le norme. «Neque «enim ut videamus (così egli nella sua lettera 143 a Marcel- «lino), quam hoc sit verum, scripturarum auctoritas neces-

«saria est, ac non sensus ipse communis ita verum esse perspi-«cua ratione proclamat, ut quisquis contradixerit, dementissi-«mus habeatur?» Il Santo Dottore in un' altra lettera indirizzata ad Evodio, che è la centesima quarantesima quarta, soggiunge: «Ecclesia fore tota consentit quod eam non inani-«ter credidisse credendum est, undecumque hoc traditum sit «etiamsi canonicarum scripturarum hinc expressa non pro-«feratur auctoritas.»

Ora che il senso comune de' fedeli dichiari immacolato il concepimento di Maria, lo dimostra la pratica introdottasi nella Chiesa da tempo immemorabile di onorarla appunto con questo gloriosissimo titolo; lo attesta lo scandalo che presero li pii e devoti cattolici, anzi intieri popoli, di quelli che ardirono di predicare, e difendere l'opinione contraria; lo prova l' impegno che mostrano di vederla da tutti salutata colla denominazione d' Immacolata; e lo dimostra finalmente l' uso d' invocare e festeggiare con tridui e novene Maria concepita senza l'original macchia qualunque volta si tratti o di far cessare qualche pubblica calamità che ci percuote, o di percuote, o di pregarla ad intercederci alcun singolare beneficio, che per proprio o comune vantaggio si brama di conseguire.

L'unanime consenso de'Fedeli prepara la formal definizione intorno alla quistione presente.

64. Se dunque, secondo S. Agostino, bastar dee a farci riguardar come vero ciò che dal comune, o quasi comune senso de' fedeli viene per vero asserito e creduto; questa condizione certamente non manca all'opinione dell' Immacolata Concezion di Maria, la quale, come abbiamo veduto, è da tutti, o quasi da tutti ammessa e professata. E così essendo la cosa, non sarà ella o temerità o demenza il contraddirla? Imperocchè è egli credibile che Iddio Signore abbia voluto permettere, che quasi tutta la Chiesa dispersa s' inganni in cosa di tanto momento? Che se Iddio veracissimo ha fatto nascere ne' fedeli delle differenti parti del mondo cattolico

questa gara di credere Maria non aver contratta neppure l'ombra sola dell' original peccato, converrà concludere che dunque la sola sentenza, che a Maria tale singolar privilegio attribuisce, è vera; e che intanto colle superne sue ispirazioni l'abbia ovunque a'fedeli stessi fatta credere e professare, affine di apparecchiare così le vie al suo Santissimo Vicario in terra di definirla per modo da doversi quinci tenere e professare non più come semplice opinione, ma qual ferma e solida verità di fede. Così la pensa anche l'esimio Suarez, il quale in 3 part. D. Thomae quaest. 27, art. 2, sect. VI, dopo aver detto: «veritatem hanc, scilicet Virginem esse con-«ceptam sine peccato originali, posse definiri ab Ecclesia «quando id expedire iudicaverit» tosto soggiunge: «Ad hanc «definitionem satis est ul aliqua supernaturalis veritas in «traditione vel scriptura implicite contenta sit, ut crescente «communi consensu Ecclesiae, per quam saepe Spiritus «Sanctus traditiones explicat, vel Scripturam declarat, tan-«dem possit definitionem suam adhibere, quae vim habet cui-«usdam revelationis propter infallibilem Spiritus Sancti «assistentiam.»

Profezia contenuta nel Salmo 40 sull' immunità di Maria dall'original colpa.

65. E poichè l' autorità di questo universal consentimento de' fedeli non viene punto affievolito dal dissentire di pochissimi che altrimenti la pensano, chi non vede, che la notissima regola del Lirinese applicar si puote senza meno anche al caso nostro, mentre anche in questo verificasi che *sempre, dovunque, e da tutti* la sentenza dell' Immacolato Concepimento di Maria fu, ed è professata ed ammessa? A dir vero questo universale senso cattolico nel credere la Concezion di Maria immune dalla macchia di origine, offre un argomento sì forte in favore di questa pia credenza, che io sarei ben maravigliato e sorpreso che al giorno d' oggi, in cui ha ella acquistato tanta luce, e riportati tanti trionfi, rinvenir si potessero

Teologi di mente non offuscata da pregiudizi e di retta coscienza, i quali osasssero, non dirò già impugnarla, ma anche sol di metterla in dubbio. E non toglie su questo ogni perplessità l' incoronato Profeta nel quarantesimo Salmo dove nel verso tredici, che gravissimi interpreti dicono doversi applicare a Maria, la fa parlare a Dio Così: *me autem propter innocentiam suscepisti, et confirmasti me in conspectu tuo in aeternum;* quasi abbia voluto dire a Dio, io intanto ti sono sì cara, perchè tu, a mio Signore, che il potevi, mi hai affatto sottratta dall' impero del tuo nemico col non farmi contaminare dall' originale peccato; e perciò mi hai ricolmata di altre infinite grazie distintissime, ed eletta a divenirti madre, perchè mi hai ritrovata innocente, e pura così quale si convenina che fosse la Madre di un Dio: «Valde profecto pro-«babilis ratio, dice il Lorino ne' suoi Commentari a questo Salmo, quum talem sibi Deus matrem praeparare potuerit, «etiam voluisse, ac ita sibi totam vindicasse, ut ab omni in «perpetuum iure daemonis liberaret. Cui, nisi praeveniendo «liberaretur, obnoxia erat, ac subiicienda fuerat. Christus semper fuit, Deus, nec extitit humanitas priusquam uniretur «divinitati, ut propter innocentiam susciperetur, quum, in-«quam, no fuerit antequam susciperetur. Deus matrem «talem fecit, qualem dixi, ut ideo sibi matrem elegerit, seu «quia volebat eligere, matrem talem fecit.»

Il non aver la Chiesa ancor definita la quistione, niun pregiudizio arreca alla nostra dottrina.
Medaglia miracolosa, e prodigi per lei operati.

66. Ma, dicono taluni, cotale pia sentenza non è stata fin qui formalmente dalla Chiesa definita. Questo è verissimo. Ma, è forse che questo prudenzial contegno della Chiesa pregiudica all'opinione nostra, e le fa perdere quella forza, che la tradizion le comparte, per cui il comun giudizio de' fedeli per vera la tiene, e la crede? Che se fin quì l' Apostolica Sede si è astenuta dal farne un articolo di fede, ha lasciato forse di

favorirla, di proteggerla, e di propagarla? Ed il regnante Sommo Pontefice GREGORIO XVI, che con tanta sua gloria ed utilità della Chiesa siede ora sull' Apostolico Trono, non accordò forse per organo della Sagra Congregazione de'-Riti alle Chiese di Francia, dell' America, dell' Inghilterra, di Lamagna, e d'Italia che il richiesero l'Indulto di aggiungere nel Prefazio del dì otto dicembre le parole *Et te in Immaculata Conceptione,* come appunto ve le aggiunge l' Ordine Francescano? E che altro prova se non la verià delle medesima la prodigiosa visione e rapidissima propagazione della nota miracolosa Medaglia, coll'impronta di *Maria concepita senza peccato,* rivelata in Parigi l'anno 1830 ad una semplice verginella, la quale per umiltà celato volle il suo nome, e che li pii fedeli tengono su di loro quasi fonte perenne di spirituali e temporali beneficii che da per tutto ottengono per l'intercession della Madre di Dio sotto questo titolo a Lei sì caro venerata, riverita, ed invocata? E la conversione streritosa accaduta sotto de' nostri occhi sul bel principio del corrente anno 1812 dell'Israelita Ratisbonne, il quale per aver ceduto alle incessanti preghiere di un suo amico, che lo indusse ad indossare la miracolosa Medaglia, colpito pubblicamente nella Chiesa di Sant' Andrea delle Fratte da un'improvvisa apparizion di Maria, che gli rischiarò la mente, e di fiero nemico perfin del nome cristiano qual'era, divenne tosto un ferventissimo Cattolico, non prova forse la certezza a un tempo, e l' utilità di questa preziosa divozione? Iddio non impiega li prodigi che per autenticare la verità, ed io penso che ne abbia operati tanti e di così straordinari in favore della rinomata Medaglia, affine di rendere dell' opinion nostra sempre più autorevole ed universale la credenza.

67. Noi non finiremmo più se tutte quì espor volessimo le riflessioni, e la ragioni che in gran folla ci si presentano alla mente a favore della nostra dottrina. Ma essendoci prefissi

di scrivere sull'argomento non un'opera, ma una semplice e breve dissertazione, crediamo che il fin quì detto basti pel nostr scopo, e di non doverci prolungare di più. Quali pero siano gli ardenti voti del nostro cuore, non abbiamo bisogno di dirlo. Certo, se nel breve spazio di tempo che ancor ci rimane da vivere, la Santa Romana Sede guidata sempre dai lumi dello Spirito Santo, giudicasse di definire l' importantissimo punto dell' Immacolata Concezion di Maria, noi allora chiuderemmo assai più volentieri li nostri occhi in pace; e portiamo ferma fiducia che un tal atto sarebbe foriero di moltiplicate grazie, di grandi misericordie, e di dolci benedizioni, le quali ad intercession di Maria piovèrebbero a dismisura sopra di Roma, e della Chiesa tutta che la riguarda come sua particolare Avvocata e protettrice. Intanto se in questi poveri scritti non ne abbiamo trattato la causa com'Essa l'avria meritato, Le ne chiediamo umilissimo perdono, pregandola ad aggradire nella sua materna bontà e clemenza l'omaggio che le offeriamo della filiale nostra divozione, e ad attribuire li difetti per avventura ivi occorsi alla tenuità del nostro ingegno piuttosto che a difetto di buon volere, il quale sarà in noi sempre fermo ed efficace, come lo zelo da cui siamo animati di propagare, esaltare, e difendere in ogni occasione il sublime privilegio tutto e solo proprio di Lei, di essere stata immune nel beato suo concepimento dall' ombra perfino dell' originale reato.

PIUS X

From original painting in Caldwell Hall, Catholic University, Washington, D. C.

CHAPTER XVI

I

SOME FUNDAMENTAL REASONS FOR THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION *

J. B. Terrien, S.J.

Nouvelle étude des raisons fondamentales pour lesquelles une Mère de Dieu devait être immaculée dans sa Conception.

I.—Les raisons fondamentales de la sainteté originelle de Marie peuvent se ramener à deux chefs: Marie est Mère de Dieu; Marie est mère du Sauveur; donc elle est immaculée dans sa Conception. Parfois, dans les monuments de la Tradition, les deux titres au privilège sont enlacés l'un avec l'autre, et parfois ils sont présentés séparément; mais unis ou distingués ils soutiennent la thèse, et pour qui sait les comprendre, il n'y a qu'une seule et même preuve à deux points de vue différents: car Marie est la mère de notre Sauveur et son Associée dans l'oeuvre de la réparation, parce qu'elle est la Mère de Dieu, comme elle est Mère de Dieu, pour être avec son fils et par son fils la Réparatrice de l'humanité déchue.

La maternité divine emporte l'exemption du péché d'origine. Nous l'avons établi déjà, l'infinie grandeur du fils exige que tout privilège de grâce, accordé par la libéralité divine aux créatures de Dieu, devienne aussi l'apanage de sa mère. Les Anges créés pour être les serviteurs de Dieu reçurent la grâce au premier instant de leur existence, en même temps qu'ils recevaient la nature. Puis-je avouer que Dieu ait moins fait pour celle qui devait être sa mère que pour les princes de sa cour céleste, ministres et serviteurs dont elle est la Reine? Eve, cette première femme, créée de Dieu pour être la mère des hommes, sortit des mains divines, tout éclatante de grâce, et la nouvelle Eve, faite pour

* *La Mère de Dieu et La Mère des Hommes.*

être la Mère de son Dieu, serait entrée dans le monde en ennemie de Dieu! Est-ce croyable?

"Si Jean-Baptiste, parce qu'il devait précéder le Seigneur dans l'esprit et la vertu d'Elie, fut rempli de l'Esprit-Saint avant sa naissance, qui oserait dire que Marie, le propitiatoire unique de l'univers, le trés doux lit où reposa le Fils du Dieu tout-puissant, ait été privée, dans sa Conception, de la lumière sanctifiante du divin Esprit"[1]? Ne fallait-il pas que la mère fût plus favorisée que le précurseur; et comment l'aurait-elle été, si sa Conception n'est pas immaculée? Dites, si vous l'osez, que sa dignité, que son ministère auprès du Fils éternel de Dieu, ne surpassent ni l'excellence ni les fonctions de Jean-Baptiste, et je concevrai votre hésitation. Mais si la vérité vous force à confesser que la Mère du Fils de Dieu l'emporte immensément sur le précurseur du même Fils, il vous faut avouer que sa sainteté va plus haut que la sienne, et par conséquent qu'elle remonte au premier instant de l'existence dans le sein maternel.

Nous l'avons encore établi, la maternité divine n'est pas un *accident* dans la vie de la très sainte Vierge; avant d'être la fille de l'Adam terrestre, elle était, dans les desseins éternels de Dieu, la mère de l'Adam céleste.[2] Ce que Dieu prétendait faire en la formant, ce n'était pas seulement une créature humaine, capable de le connaitre, de l'aimer et de le

[1] Tractat. *de Concept.* P. L. clix. 305.

[2] Elle n'est pas devenue de fille d'Adam mère de Jésus; tout au contraire, c'est pour être mère de Jésus, qu'elle est née d'Adam. Donc, en elle la maternité divine doit primer la filiation naturelle. Comme fille d'Adam, elle devait contracter la souillure commune; comme mère de Jésus, elle doit en être exempte. Deux conditions qui sont en lutte. Qui l'emportera du vieil Adam ou du Nouveau? Le Fils de Dieu, qui l'a faite pour en être fait, et qui, par conséquent, a dû la faire comme il voulait en être fait, c'est-à-dire sans tache. Sa naissance exigerait le péché; sa maternité future est inconciliable avec le péché. Le moyen de conciliation, c'est qu'elle en soit préservée par les mérites de celui qui l'a faite pour en être fait. Préservée, donc elle devait contracter la faute originelle; préservée, donc elle n'a pas contracté cette faute.

servir. C'est la destinée commune. Avant tout et par-dessus tout, il se préparait une mère. Que faites-vous. Seigneur, en rendant miraculeusement féconde cette femme que la nature avait laissée stérile? Ma mère, vous répond-il; le temple animé que j'habiterai bientôt dans la chair; un corps d'où je tirerai mon corps. Voilà mon intention principale: tellement principale que, si je ne l'avais pas en vue, j'abandonnerais la nature à son impuissance. Quand Dieu créa le premier homme, il mit en lui toutes les propriétés et les perfections nécessaires à la fin pour laquelle il le façonnait. Est-il possible que, penché sur le sein de la bienheureuse Anne, pour y former sa propre mère, il l'ait privée de ce qui, plus que tout le reste, est indispensablement requis dans une Mère de Dieu, la grâce et l'innocence?

Autrement n'aurions-nous pas le droit de lui dire: Quoi! Seigneur; vous avez la prétention de façonner votre mère, et de vous bâtir un temple exclusivement réservé pour être votre demeure; et cette mère vous la faites votre ennemie, et ce temple est, dès le principe, souillé par la présence et l'empire de Satan. Où donc est votre sagesse; où, votre puissance? Ils se sont donc trompés vos Saints, quand ils ont appelé Marie "le temple saint de Dieu que le Salomon spirituel s'est construit lui-même, et qu'il a fait tout éclatant, non pas d'un or matériel, mais de la lumière du Saint-Esprit";[3] un tabernacle sacré que le Verbe, nouveau Béséléel, a travaillé de ses mains divines;[4] le sanctuaire où le péché n'a pas d'entrée; le propitiatoire divin que Dieu lui-même a fondé;[5] un paradis planté par la Trinité, Père, Fils et Saint-Esprit; un éden spirituel, plus saint et plus auguste

[3] S. Joan. Damasc., hom. *de Nativ. Deip.*, n. 10. P. G. xcvi, 617.

[4] S. Ephrem, iii (græce), p. 529.

[5] Modest. Hier., *Encom. Deip.*, n. 10. P. G. lxxxvi, 3305.

que le premier?[6] C'est donc à tort que, dans la fête de la Conception de la Vierge, ils parlaient aux fidèles "du palais royal *construit aujourd'hui* même et préparé pour le Seigneur du monde"; à tort aussi que ce jour leur paraît dépasser par les splendeurs de la grâce toutes les clartés du ciel?[7]

Comprenez-vous la force invincible de ces preuves? Marie n'est pas autrement conçue que les enfants ordinaires, au point de vue de la nature: car l'assistance divine, qui vint au secours de la stérilité maternelle, n'eut d'autre effet que de réveiller et d'activer la vertu génératrice infusée par la nature. Si donc la Trinité tout entière est là travaillant, pour y faire une œuvre digne d'elle, son action spéciale et singulièrement propre appartient au domaine de la grâce. Ce qu'elle produit ce n'est pas la matière telle quelle du temple futur; une matière qu'il faudra séparer de la masse informe et souillée, purifier, tailler pour qu'elle soit la demeure de Dieu; non, le sanctuaire sort, au premier instant, de l'amour et de la puissance divine, purifié, paré, consacré. Car, il faut le redire après nos textes, ce que Dieu veut faire en produisant Marie, c'est, avant tout, sa mère; sa mère, dis-je, et non pas seulement une femme qu'il choisira pour naître d'elle. Le choix est fait de toute éternité, et ce choix commande et règle la formation, l'existence même de son objet.

Voulez-vous une autre considération, regardez le sein du Père, où fut éternellement conçu le Fils commun du Père et de la Vierge. Il n'est pas seulement pur, mais la pureté même; il n'est pas seulement saint, mais la sainteté même. Et vous pourriez admettre que ce Fils éternellement conçu, éternellement né dans cet abîme sans fond de pureté et de

[6] Voir ces témoignages et d'autres du même genre à l'infini dans le P. Passaglia, *de Immaculato Conceptu*, n. 1301, seqq., *et alibi passim*.

[7] Jacob. Monach. or., *in SS. Deiparae Concept.*, n. 1-4. P. G. cxxvii, 544, sqq., etc.

sainteté, fut conçu dans le temps et naquît d'un sein primitivement souillé! Le Père n'aurait pas regardé comme un outrage fait à sa génération très sainte, une semblable naissance; ou bien, ayant conscience de cet outrage, il l'aurait permis?

J'entends saint Anselme qui me dit: "Il convenait qu'elle brillât d'une pureté sans égale au-dessous de Dieu (*qua major sub Deo nequit intelligi*), cette Vierge à qui Dieu le Père devait donner son Fils unique, un Fils né de son cœur, égal à lui-même, tellement que le Fils du Père et le fils de la Vierge fussent naturellement un seul et même commun fils";[8] et malgré cette suprême convenance, l'origine de Marie serait impure à l'égale de la mienne? Est-ce là glorifier le sein du Père et son amour pour son Unique? Jugeons-en par ce que nous voyons dans les alliances humaines. Qu'il y ait une tare originelle dans une personne, remarquable d'ailleurs par son mérite et sa vertu, ce sera toujours un obstacle qui lui fermera l'entrée d'une famille absolument pure; un père, une mère ne l'accepteront jamais pour leur fille.

II. — Si nous considérons Marie comme Mère du Dieu *Sauveur* et *Réparateur* de la nature déchue, le privilège de sa Conception immaculée ne s'impose pas avec moins de certitude et de clarté. En effet, mère du Sauveur, elle est par là même son associée dans la grande œuvre de la réparation, nouvelle Eve aux côtés du nouvel Adam. Quand Dieu créa le premier homme, il le fit pour être le père d'une postérité qui, d'après son dessein primordial, devait naître à la vie de la grâce en recevant celle de la nature; si bien que les hommes seraient devenus, au même moment, enfants de l'homme et fils adoptifs de Dieu. C'est pourquoi Dieu lui donna, dès le

[8] S. Anselm., L. *de Conceptu Virgin.* c. 18. P. L. clviii, 451.

premier moment de sa création, la double vie qui devait être l'apanage de toute créature humaine, à son entrée dans le monde. Et parce que la femme était appelée à propager avec Adam la famille ainsi sanctifiée dans son principe, Dieu la forma de la chair du premier homme, vivante comme lui de la double vie de la nature et de la grâce. Ne fallait-il pas que les origines des premiers ancêtres ne fussent pas moins saintes que celles de leur postérité?

Je ne m'étonnerais donc pas d'entendre l'Apôtre enseigner du nouvel Adam qu'il fut saint, pur, immaculé, séparé des pécheurs, plein de grâce et de vérité, à l'instant même où il se revêtit de notre nature,[9] quand même sa dignité de Fils de Dieu me serait encore inconnue. Ce qui me surprendrait, ce serait d'apprendre que la nouvelle Ève, cette Mère des vivants, a été conçue dans la mort, et qu'elle n'est pas dès lors sortie par anticipation vivante et pure du côté de Jésus, endormi sur la croix. L'ordre de la réparation ne serait plus en rapport harmonieux avec celui de la première institution; et la compagne de l'Homme-Dieu serait, de ce chef, préparée moins complètement à son ministère de grâce que l'associée de notre premier père.

Nos anciens Docteurs, ceux de l'Orient surtout, ont célébré, dans la Conception de la bienheureuse Vierge,[10] le gage et les arrhes de notre future délivrance; elle leur est apparue comme l'aurore du beau jour où, le ciel se réconciliant avec la terre, la colère cédait la place à la grâce, et la mort, à la vie. Cette enfant, qui fait son entrée dans l'existence, est pour eux la magnifique et glorieuse rançon d'Eve; la nouvelle masse de la seconde création; les prémices d'une race très sainte. Auraient-ils eu ces pensées si la Conception de

[9] Hebr., vii, 26; Joan., i, 14.

[10] Leurs discours sur ce mystère portent souvent comme titre: de la *Conception* de Ste-Anne, parce qu'ils signifient par ce mot la conception active.

Marie n'avait pas été sans tache; et si, dans ce jour, il n'y avait eu de plus au monde qu'un enfant de colère, privé comme les autres de la grâce et de l'amitié de son Dieu? Singulière préparation de la Coopératrice du Verbe incarné dans ses triomphes sur l'ennemi du genre humain, que celle qui la réduirait à porter d'abord le joug, et la rangerait parmi les vaincus, avant de l'appeler à partager le travail et l'honneur de la victoire.

Ce serait sortir de notre plan que de vouloir développer longuement ici l'annonce prophétique du Libérateur, incluse dans la malédiction portée par Dieu contre le serpent infernal: "Voici que je mettrai des inimitiés entre toi et la femme, entre ta semence et sa semence; et celle-ci t'écrasera la tête."[11] Mail il nous est bien permis d'y montrer en quelques mots la confirmation de ce que nous venons d'avancer dans les pages précédentes. Que la *femme* mentionnée dans l'oracle divin soit Marie, c'est ce que le peuple chrétien ne met pas en doute. Trop souvent il a vu les images qui la représentent foulant le serpent sous son talon virginal. Je suppose maintenant la vérité de cette interprétation que nous aurons lieu d'établir solidement dans la suite. Sur cela, voici comment je raisonne.

D'après le texte sacré, l'inimitié entre la femme et le serpent est une inimitié sans restriction, absolue, que Dieu lui-même a faite; une inimitié singulièrement propre à cette femme à raison de son union très intime avec son fruit; une inimitié qui oppose la même femme au serpent infernal, auteur du *péché de nature;* une inimitié qui contraste efficacement avec l'amitié d'Eve, c'est-à-dire avec une amitié dont le terme est pour Eve et pour sa descendance la privation de la grâce originelle; une inimitié semblable, disons

[11] Gen. iii. 15.

mieux, identique à celle qui doit exister entre le fils de la femme et le démon représenté par le serpent; une inimitié enfin qui va finalement à l'écrasement du serpent infernal sous le pied du fils de la femme.

Supposez maintenant la Vierge, Mère de Dieu, conçue comme nous dans le péché originel, l'inimitié n'est plus ce que nous venons de dire: elle n'est pas absolue, ni singulièrement propre à la femme, puisqu'elle ne seriat venue, comme pour nous, qu'après l'amitié; elle n'est pas une inimitié qui oppose cette femme à l'auteur même du péché d'origine et la sépare ainsi d'Eve pécheresse, puisque la seconde Eve aurait contracté le même péché qui asservit et dépouilla la première; elle ne serait pas l'inimitié que nous admirons dans le fils, puisque celui-ci n'appartint jamais à la société du démon; la femme enfin n'écraserait pas avec son fils et par son fils la tête du monstre, artisan principal de notre ruine, puisqu'elle en serait d'abord la victime et l'esclave.

Qu'on ne vienne pas objecter ici que tous les saints, par le fait même qu'ils sont les membres vivants du Christ vivant, font partie de la semence de la femme; ce qui pourtant n'emporte pas pour eux l'exemption du péché d'origine. La réponse est aisée. S'ils ont été pécheurs, c'est qu'ils n'étaient pas encore devenus la semence de la femme par leur incorporation dans le Christ. Une fois cette heureuse union faite et tant qu'elle dure, c'est-à-dire tant qu'ils appartiennent de fait à la lignée de *la femme,* ils sont les ennemis du démon. "Quiconque, dit l'Apôtre, est né de Dieu ne commet point le péché."[12]

Le Christ lui-même qui, par sa nature humaine, est cette semence de la femme, fut toujours, conformément au présent oracle, absolument séparé du démon. Donc, Marie qui

[12] I Joan. iii. 9.

fut, dès sa conception, *la femme* par excellence, la femme ayant pour semence le Christ Sauveur, suit les destinées de son fils. Comme pour lui c'est donc une hostilité toujours existante entre elle et le diable. Donc enfin, même au premier instant de son existence, elle fut ornée de la grâce, exempte de toute souillure et de tout péché.[13]

Qui ne voit par là que, dès ce premier oracle, la maternité divine nous apparait comme la source et la racine de l'immaculée Conception? Car enfin, c'est la semence principale, le Christ Rédempteur qui, le premier, de son pied victorieux écrase la tête du serpent, et le triomphe du Fils est la victoire et le salut de la mère: *"Ipsum conteret caput tuum."* [14] Et voilà de nouveau comment tout nous ramène à la maternité divine, quelque privilège que nous admirions en Marie.

[13] Voir sur ce raisonnement le R. P. Billot, dans son beau traité *de Verbo incarnato*, pp. 341, sqqq.

[14] On sait que le texte de la Vulgate porte: *Ipsa* conteret. J'ai pris la leçon généralement admise comme plus conforme au texte original.

II

EXPLANATION OF THE DOGMA

De Immunitate A Peccato Originali Seu De Immaculato Conceptu *

Edward Hugon, O.P., S.T.M.

Definitio dogmatis a Pio IX, 8 dec. 1854.—"Ad honorem Sanctæ et Individuæ Trinitatis, ad decus et ornamentum Virginis Deiparæ, ad exaltationem fidei catholicæ et christianæ religionis augmentum, auctoritate Domini Nostri Jesu Christi, beatorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli ac Nostra, declaramus, pronuntiamus et definimus doctrinam, quæ tenet beatissimam Virginem Mariam *in primo instanti suæ conceptionis fuisse singulari omnipotentis Dei gratia et privilegio, intuitu meritorum Christi Jesu Salvatoris humani generis, ab omni originalis culpæ labe præservatam immunem, esse a Deo revelatam* atque idcirco ab omnibus fidelibus firmiter constanterque credendam."[1]

In hac definitione quinque sunt præcipue attendenda. 1°, Doctrinam illam *esse a Deo revelatam,* ac proinde contineri *saltem implicite* in Scriptura et Traditione. Quapropter eadem bulla *Ineffabilis Deus* illam vocat *doctrinam* DIVINITUS ACCEPTAM et *coelestis revelationis* DEPOSITO *comprehensam . . . quam* DIVINA ELOQUIA, *veneranda* TRADITIO, *perpetuus Ecclesiæ sensus mirifice illustrant atque declarant.* 2°, B. Virginem fuisse ab ipsa *labe originalis culpæ* præservatam immunem, non tamen ab ipso *debito* contrahendi originale peccatum, ut mox explicabitur. 3°, *In primo suæ conceptionis instanti,* scilicet in ipso instanti quo fuit anima creata et corpori unita, ita quidem ut nequeat assignari instans quo fuerit anima peccato inquinata vel

* From *Tractatus Dogmatici,* vol. II, p. 738.

[1] Bull. *Ineffabilis Deus,* Collect. Lacens. VI, 842 SS.; Denzinger, 1641.

gratia carens. Quocirca excluditur opinio veterum dicentium animam in primo instanti unionis cum corpore originalem maculam contraxisse ac deinde fuisse mundatam.

Definitio intactam prorsus relinquit quæstionem de tempore quo anima corpori infudatur, an scilicet ipso fecundationis momento, an postea quum corpus fuerit magis evolutum. Quidquid sit de controversia illa, certum est animam B. Virginis eo ipso instanti fuisse sanctificatam quo fuit corpori infusa. 4°, Hujusmodi præservationem esse singulare beneficium, seu *miraculum spirituale*, quod omnipotentiam divinam requirat et idcirco in pontificio documento dicitur: *singulari omnipotentis Dei gratia et privilegio*. 5°, *Intuitu meritorum Christi*, ut indicetur B. Virginem indiguisse redemptione et fuisse a Christo redemptam. Hæc verba desumuntur ex bulla Alexandri VII: *Sollicitudo omnium Ecclesiarum*, d. 8 dec. 1661, ubi dicitur: "Speciali Dei gratia et privilegio, *intuitu meritorum Jesu Christi ejus filii, humani generis* REDEMPTORIS."[2] Quam doctrinam pariter asserit sacra liturgia, oratione propria festi Immac. Concept., quæ jam a Sixto IV fuerat approbata: *"Ex morte ejusdem Filii tui prævisa eam ab omni labe præservasti."* Quum ergo indiguerit B. Virgo meritis Christi *Salvatoris* seu *Redemptoris*, vel *morte* ipsius, fuit vero ac proprio sensu redempta, non quidem redemptione *restaurativa*, quia de facto non fuit unquam B. Virgo mortua; sed redemptione *præservativa*, quatenus habuerit Maria verum debitum contrahendi peccatum originale. Christus quidem fuit ab originali peccato immunis et ratione unionis hypostaticæ, quia repugnat peccatum ubi repugnat suppositum fieri Deo inimicum; et ratione conceptionis virginalis, quia non descendebat ab Adamo per viam generationis, seu, prout dicit S. Augustinus, fuit in Adamo non secundum *seminalem rationem*,

[2] Bullar. Roman., edit. Taurin., XVI, 739 b.

sed solum secundum *corpulentam substantiam.*[3] B. Virgo porro neutram habuit exemptionis causam, sed ab Adamo per seminalem rationem descendit, et idcirco habuit debitum. Tenendum est igitur ipsam fuisse præservatam non intuitu propriorum meritorum quae debebat in futurum acquirere, sed intuitu meritorum Christi *Redemptoris,* ita ut sit ipsa a proprio Filio redempta, et adstruatur illa redemptionis universalitas, quae est dogma in oeconomia christiana inconcussum.

[3] S. Augustin., *De Genesi ad litter.*, lib. X, c. XIX et XX; P. L., XXXV, 423.

DE IMMACULATO CONCEPTU BEATAE MARIAE VIRGINIS *

ALEXIS CARD. LEPICIER, O.S.M.

1.—Peccati originalis traductio.—Docet fides catholica, primum peccatum primi hominis originaliter transire in posteros, ita quod quicumque ortum ducit per virtutem activam ab Adam derivatam, peccatum in ipso suo conceptu contrahere debeat, ideoque nasci *filius irae*.[1] Quod Apostolus ad Romanos scribens ita solemniter tradidit[2]: *Per unum hominem peccatum in hunc mundum intravit,* scilicet, non per modum imitationis tantummodo, aut per modum incitationis, sed per modum verae traductionis a primo parente in eius posteros.

Quod quidem non ita debet intelligi, quasi anima rationalis, quae sola est peccati subiectum, traducatur cum semine: nec ista originalis peccati traductio similis est traductioni defectuum corporalium aut etiam moralium a parentibus in proles: huiusmodi enim defectus, ex quo habentur ex origine, culpabilitate vel imputatione vacant, peccatum vero originale est vera macula spiritualis, per modum habitus animae inhaerens. Quocirca definiri solet peccatum originale[3] *quaedam inordinata dispositio proveniens ex dissolutione illius harmoniae in qua consistebat ratio originalis iustitiae:* non secus ac aegritudo corporalis est quaedam inordinata corporis dispositio, secundum quam solvitur aequalitas in qua consistit sanitatis ratio. Quapropter peccatum originale dicitur *languor naturae,* et est quaedam inordinatio naturae, sicut peccatum actuale est quaedam inordinatio actus.[4]

Ut autem sciatur qua ratione peccatum istud propagetur, considerandum est quod omnes homines, qui ex Adam nas-

* From *Tractatus De Beatissima Virgine Maria,* p. 135.

[1] EPH., II, 3.

[2] C. V, 12.

[3] Cf. tr. DE PECC. ORIG., quaest. LXXXII, art. 1, n. 6, p. 69.

[4] IBID., pp. 66, seqq.

cuntur, possunt considerari ut unus homo, in quantum conveniunt in natura quam a primo parente accipiunt; et quemadmodum omnes homines unius populi sunt membra unius corporis, ita omnes homines ab Adam derivati, sunt tanquam multa membra unius corporis. Porro, in uno homine, actus unius membri, verbi gratia, homicidium quod manus committit, non est voluntarius voluntate ipsius manus, et ita non imputatur ad peccatum manui secundum se consideratae, sed voluntarius est voluntate animae, quae primo movet membrum, et ita imputatur manui solum in quantum manus est aliquid hominis, quod movetur a primo principio motivo hominis. Pariter, inordinatio quae est in *hoc* homine ex Adam genito, non est voluntaria voluntate ipsius, sed voluntate primi parentis, qui movet motione generationis omnes qui ex eius origine derivantur.[5]

Sicut igitur membra moventur ab anima ad peccatum actuale, ita homines moventur ab Adam per generationem ad peccatum originale. Porro, non est motio ad generationem, nisi per virtutem activam in generatione: quocirca illi soli peccatum originale contrahunt, qui ab Adam descendunt per virtutem activam in generatione originaliter ab Adam derivatam, seu per seminalem rationem, cum virtus activa in generatione non sit aliud, nisi seminalis motio. Unde, si quis formaretur ex carne quidem humana, sed non seminali ratione, vis activa non derivaretur ab Adam, ideoque talis peccatum originale non contraheret; quemadmodum si manus hominis non moveretur a voluntate hominis, sed ab aliquo extrinseco movente, actus eius non pertineret ad peccatum.[6]

2.—Christus originale peccatum non contraxit.—Cum itaque ex dictis iam constet Christum, ex humana quidem

[5] IBID., pp. 30, seqq.
[6] IBID., pp. 51 et sqq.

carne, sed non seminali virtute fuisse conceptum, hinc apparet, quod vi suae generationis singularissimae, nullimode peccatum originale contraxit. Quocirca finis Immaculatae Conceptionis Beatae Virginis non debet sic intelligi, quasi necessaria ista fuerit ut impediretur transfusio peccati originalis in prolem, id est in Christum[7]: transfusio enim peccati originalis in Christo sufficienter impeditur per hoc quod ponitur conceptus ex Spiritu Sancto. Unde, etiamsi Beata Virgo fuisset infecta peccato originali, non propterea Christus cum originali peccato conceptus fuisset. Quod exprimit S. Thomas, qui, dum commentatur illud Damasceni[8]: *Spiritus Sanctus supervenit qui purgavit eam* (scil. Virginem), ait[9]: *Illa purgatio praeveniens in Beata Virgine non requirebatur ad auferendam transfusionem originalis peccati, sed quia oportebat ut Mater Dei maxima puritate niteret; non enim est aliquid digne receptaculum Dei, nisi sit mundum, secundum illud*[10]: DOMUM TUAM, DOMINE, DECET SANCTITUDO.

Sed talis exemptio, praecise ex vi conceptionis, singularissima est in Christo Domino, qui solus ex virtute Spiritus Sancti conceptus est. Praeter ipsum igitur, omnes homines *ex Adam derivati,* ait S. Thomas,[11] *peccatum originale ex Adam contrahunt, alioquin non omnes indigerent redemptione quae est per Christum, quod est erroneum.*

Porro, notandus est genuinus horum verborum sensus, ne quis existimet his verbis S. Thomam erroneum reputare quod quis ex speciali privilegio praeservari potuerit. *Est igitur*

[7] Ad rem S. Bonaventura (3 Sent., Dist. III, P. II, 2, Q. I, Opp., T. III, p. 86): *Non fuisset necessaria Virginis sanctificatio ad hoc quod formaretur caro Christi sine omni peccato.*

[8] L. III *Orth. Fid.*, c. 2, t. I, p. 204.

[9] Cf. 1 2ae. Quaest. LXXXI, art. 5, ad. 3.

[10] Ps. XCII. 5.

[11] 1 2ae Quaest. LXXXI, art. 3.

necessarium secundum fidem catholicam credere, ait Caietanus,[12] *quod omnis utriusque sexus, ab Adam secundum rationem seminalem proveniens, ex ipsa sua generatione sit obnoxius peccato originali, et iuxta hunc sensum militat ratio auctoris, scilicet, quia aliter non indigerent redemptione quae per Iesum Christum facta est. Si enim peccatum originale vel in actu, vel in necessitate habendi illud quis non incurreret, non egeret redemptione, quod haereticum esset dicere; sed, si omnes obnoxii sunt peccato originali, sufficit ad indigentiam redemptionis. Neque enim solum redemptione eget actualiter captivus sed etiam obnoxius captivitati.*

Quibus ita praestitutis, sit sequens

3.—PROP.—**Beatissima Virgo Maria, in primo instanti suae conceptionis, fuit singulari omnipotentis Dei gratia et privilegio, intuitu meritorum Christi Iesu Salvatoris humani generis, ab omni originalis culpae labe praeservata immunis.**

Verba haec ipsissima sunt quibus usus est Pius IX[13]: *Ad honorem Sanctae et Individuae Trinitatis, ad decus et ornamentum Virginis Deiparae, ad exaltationem fidei catholicae et christianae religionis augmentum, auctoritate Domini Nostri Iesu Christi, beatorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli, ac Nostra, declaramus, pronunciamus et definimus, doctrinam, quae tenet beatissimam Virginem Mariam in primo instanti suae Conceptionis fuisse singulari omnipotentis Dei gratia et privilegio, intuitu meritorum Christi Iesu Salvatoris humani generis, ab omni originalis culpae labe praeservatam immunem, esse a Deo revelatam, atque idcirco ab omnibus fidelibus firmiter constanterque credendam.*

[12] In hunc loc.

[13] In bulla INEFFABILIS.

Circa modum huiusce definitionis advertendum est Pium IX, per hunc solemnissimum actum, minime praevenisse definitionem dogmaticam de pontificia infallibilitate: etsi enim rogantibus episcopis Romae praesentibus, ille solus definitionem ediderit,[14] non omisit tamen mentionem facere de votis episcoporum qui, illius rogatui arcessituique respondentes,[15] fere unanimiter erant testati suam populorumque sibi commissorum sententiam esse, Virginem in suo Conceptu Immaculatam fuisse.[16]

Porro, antequam ad thesim demonstrandam deveniamus, primo loco insistendum nobis erit in exhibendo genuino sensu, quo accipi debeat dogma de Immaculata Conceptione: qui sensus prioribus theseos verbis clauditur.

4.—Cur dicatur in primo instanti.—Imprimis, ex verbis Pii IX docemur, Beatam Virginem hoc privilegio in primo instanti suae Conceptionis fuisse donatam. Revera, sensus Ecclesiae iugiter fuit ut privilegium huiusmodi in primo instanti Conceptionis beatissimae Virginis assereretur. Cum enim nonnulli excogitassent discrimen inter primum et alterum conceptionis instans et momentum, asserentes celebrari quidem Conceptionem, sed non pro primo instanti atque momento, Romani Pontifices *suarum partium esse duxerunt et*

[14] Cf. La Solenne Definizione del Dogma dell' Immacolato Concep. Atti e Documenti, ab. Ill. mo. VINC. SARDI edit., P. II, passim.

[15] Pius IX. 2 Febr. 1849, encyclicam ab urbe Caieta, ad omnes totius orbis episcopos direxerat, sciscitans quid ipsi, quid clerus, quid populus sibi concrediti de hac re sentirent et exoptarent. Vide opus cit. P. I, p. 571.

[16] Revera, quingenti quadraginta sex episcopi singularem suam suarumque ovium fidem in Immac. Concept. testati sunt: quatuor tantum vel quinque definitioni adversarios sese professi sunt: demum quinquaginta, etsi faverent definitioni, aliqua tamen dubia sive circa opportunitatem, sive circa rationem edendae definitionis protulerunt. Op. cit. P. II, p. 175. Omnes autem episcoporum responsiones, una cum pluribus insignium virorum de hoc argumento dissertationibus, collectae fuerunt et evulgatae in novem voluminibus sub communi titulo: *Pareri dell' Episcopato Cattolico*, Romae. Typis *della Civ. Catt.*, 1851.

beatissimae Virginis festum et Conceptionem pro primo instanti, tanquam verum cultus obiectum omni studio tueri ac propugnare.[17]

Ne autem aequivocatio cadat circa istud primum Conceptionis instans, sedulo notanda sunt decretoria verba quibus olim Alexander VII, Ecclesiae mentem declarabat, ad quae verba Pius IX appellat in Bulla *Ineffabilis,* eo fine ut verus et genuinus sensus exhibeatur quo Immaculatae Conceptionis dogma debet intelligi. *Sane,* inquit praelaudatus Pontifex Alexander VII[18], *vetus est Christi fidelium erga eius beatissimam Matrem Virginem Mariam pietas, sentientium eius animam in primo instanti creationis atque infusionis in corpus fuisse speciali Dei gratia et privilegio, intuitu meritorum Iesu Christi eius Filii, humani generis Redemptoris, a macula peccati originalis praeservatam immunem, atque in hoc sensu eius Conceptionis festivitatem solemni ritu colentium et celebrantium.*

5.—Conceptio activa et conceptio passiva.—Porro, verba ista viam aperiunt percelebri ac diu probatae a philosophis ac theologis distinctioni, scilicet inter conceptionem activam et conceptionem passivam. Prior se tenet ex parte principii naturae, et respicit conceptum in illo statu, in quem virtus formativa parentum primo illum perducit, in quo statu foetus, utpote imperfectissimus et nondum capax animae rationalis, anima tantum vegetativa informatur; cui foetui perfectiori et evolutiori advenit suo tempore anima sensitiva, et postea anima rationalis. Altera conceptio, scilicet passiva, se tenet ex parte termini rationalis naturae, et habetur solummodo quando corpori iam ad sufficientem perfectionem perducto infunditur anima rationalis a Deo tunc creata. *Et*

[17] Bulla INEFFABILIS.

[18] In Const. SOLLICITUDO, die 8 dec., 1661.

utrumque, ait Magister Sententiarum,[19] *vocatur conceptus, scilicet et cum caro propagatur, formamque corporis humani recipit, et cum anima infunditur, quod aliquando etiam dicitur nativitas. . .proprie autem nativitas dicitur in lucem editio.*[20]

Hanc distinctionem Benedictus XIV fusiori calamo prosequitur. *Conceptio, ait,*[21] *dupliciter accipi potest: vel enim est activa, in qua sancti Beatae Virginis parentes opere maritali invicem convenientes praestiterunt ea quae maxime spectabant ad ipsius corporis formationem, organisationem et dispositionem ad recipiendam animam rationalem a Deo infundendam, — vel est passiva, cum rationalis anima cum corpore copulatur. Ipsa animae infusio et unio cum corpore debite organisato vulgo nominatur conceptio passiva, quae scilicet fit illo ipso instanti, quo rationalis anima corpori omnibus membris ac suis organis constanti unitur.*

Utraque autem ista conceptio, quae profecto in Christo Domino non distinguitur tempore, eo quod conceptio eius, operante Spiritu Sancto, fuit completa in instanti,[22] in ipsa Beatissima Virgine debet realiter distingui, non minus quam in alterius cuiuscumque hominis conceptione, cum ipsa ex viro et muliere convenientibus fuerit formata.

Porro, cum conceptio non sit formaliter humana, nisi illo instanti quo anima rationalis infunditur corpori et cum corpore individuum humanae speciei constituit, motus enim a termino denominatur et speciem sumit, et cum, ex altera parte, homo non sit peccati capax, nisi in quantum habet animam rationalem per quam solam etiam est capax ut sanctificetur per gratiam, ideo cum maiori theologorum parte

[19] Lib. 2 Sent., Dist. XXXI.

[20] Vocata etiam est prior conceptio *materialis*, et altera *personalis*.

[21] De Fest., l. II, c. XV, n. 1. Edit. Rom., 1786.

[22] Vide supra, P. I, c. II, a. 2, n. 7, p. 74.

contendimus definitionem pianam sub luce definitionis alexandrinae hoc sensu sumi debere, quod Beata Virgo, in primo instanti quo anima rationalis creata est et infusa eius corpori, fuerit in originali iustitia concepta. Verba enim Pontificis ad animam ac personam Beatae Virginis referuntur, minime vero ad id quod nequit dici *Beata Virgo* nisi in causa, virtute aut potentia[23]: dicit enim Beatam Virginem, in primo instanti suae Conceptionis, fuisse *praeservatam* immunem ab originali peccato.

Itaque vi conceptionis suae materialis, Beata Virgo debuisset esse obnoxia debito contrahendi peccatum originale; ita quod, nisi speciali Dei privilegium accessisset, illud contrahere debuisset; sed ex Dei munere, qui legibus a se constitutis non subditur, contigit quod caro Mariae non infecerit eius animam; immo anima tanta virtute fuerit donata, ut ipsam carnem omnino mundaverit ab omni radicali vitiosa dispositione. Hoc autem est praecise quod significatur illo commate: *Singulari omnipotentis Dei gratia et privilegio, intuitu meritorum Christi Iesu Salvatoris humani generis;* quae verba fere eadem recurrunt, uti vidimus, in definitione Alexandri VII.

6.—Quid significent verba: Singulari omnipotentis Dei gratia, etc.—Porro, his verbis duo significantur: *primo,* singulare privilegium Beatae Virgini collatum; *secundo,* causa meritoria huius privilegii.

Et quidem, cum privilegium sit gratia quaedam constans, a superiore alicui collata, praeter aut etiam contra legem communem, sat inde eruitur quod Beata Virgo obnoxia fuisset, vi conceptionis suae ex parentibus, contrahendo pec-

[23] De origine animae humanae, et de distinctione inter conceptionem activam et passivam, fuse disseruimus in Op. *Dell'opera dei sei giorni,* P. II, c. VI. Romae, 1904.

cato originali, et proinde cuidam *debito* illud contrahendi fuisset subiecta nisi exempta fuisset: non secus ac puer, qui ex matre in statu servitutis constituta nasceretur, qui tamen ex praevia domini mulieris dispositione futurus esset liber, esset quidem actu a servitute liber, attamen vi nativitatis ex tali muliere debuisset et ipse servitutem contrahere, nisi extitisset illa praevia exemptio; et ideo debitum quoddam contrahendi servitutem habuisset nisi fuisset exemptus. Similiter Beata Virgo debuisset, ex vi Conceptionis suae ex parentibus, originale peccatum contrahere, nisi adfuisset speciale Dei privilegium.

Qua quidem expositione, nihil prorsus Virginis dignitati aut catholico dogmati detrahitur, ut aliqui irrationaliter conqueruntur; quin potius salvatur praeservationis et exemptionis ratio in Beata Virgine, necnon singularis Christo proprietas manet, quod ipse nullimode, nec remote quidem, vi suae conceptionis, fuerit peccato originali obnoxius. Praeterea, ista distinctio viam aperit explicandis catholico sensu plurium Patrum dictis, quae prima fronte contra hoc dogma pugnantia videntur, ut infra ostendetur. Hanc autem veritatem illustrat illud Ulpiani[24]: *Princeps legibus solutus est; Augusta autem, licet legibus soluta non sit, princeps tamen eadem illi privilegia tribuit, quae et ipse habet.*

Ubi vis quoque facienda est in verbis definitionis, *singulari* omnipotentis Dei gratia et privilegio: licet enim nec fidei catholicae, nec rationi theologicae expresse adversetur aliquorum positio, Deum alios etiam sanctos, verbi gratia sanctum Ioseph, ab originali labe praeservasse, tamen et verbis Bullæ *Ineffabilis*, et theologico sensui conformior est sententia adserens privilegium illud pro una Dei Matre,

[24] Habetur II, tit. 3, DE LEG., lege XXXI.

praecise divinae maternitatis ratione; cui et ipsa Beatissima Virgo suffragari visa est, dum in celebri sui apparitione apud Lourdes in Gallia, seipsam esse dixit non solum *immaculate conceptam,* sed ipsammet *Immaculatam Conceptionem: Je suis l'Immaculée Conception,*—quasi a tali privilegio quicumque alius purus homo excludatur.[25]

Denique statuitur Beatam Virginem decretam fuisse immunem ab originali labe, non intuitu ipsiusmet futurorum meritorum, puta quae sua compassione comparatura erat, ut aliqui falso imaginantur, sed *intuitu meritorum Christi,* ita quod rite dicatur prima omnium creaturarum a Christo redemptarum, primitiae fructus pretiosissimi eius Sanguinis. Cum enim Christus sit omnium Redemptor, nullimode ipsemet redemptus, aequum fuit ut redemptionis fructum prima omnium illa caperet, quae ad ipsum propinquius omnibus, maternitatis relatione, accedebat. Et quia quanto propinquius aliquod receptivum accedit ad principium influens, tanto magis de eius influxu recipit, ideo redemptio Beatae Virgini collata non liberativa, sed praeservativa esse debuit; nec propterea ex hoc desinit esse redemptio, quod Maria vinculis peccati nunquam actu fuerit detenta: non enim minus est a lapsu aliquem totaliter impedire, quam post lapsum iterum erigere. Unde, in Bulla *Ineffabilis,* Beata Virgo expresse dicitur *sublimiori modo redempta.*

7.—Duplex redemptio.—Est igitur duplex redemptio. alia *restaurativa* seu liberativa, alia autem *praeservativa,* seu anticipata. Et haec, non minus quam illa, vera redemptio est. Quem in locum faciunt pulcherrima verba S. Augustini, qui, commentans illud: *Eruisti animam meam ex*

[25] Quapropter minime probandum est quod aliqui confingunt de immaculata conceptione S. Ioseph. Nuper, decreto S. Officii (Febr. 1907), condemnatus est articulus a JOSÉ DOMINGO M. CORBATO conscriptus, in eph. La Señal de la Victoria, cui titulus, *El Immaculado S. Jose.*

inferno inferiori, — Quidam, ait,[26] *... orans in voce Christi, eruisse Deum animam suam ab inferno inferiore dixit, quia liberavit se a talibus peccatis, per quae posset deduci ad tormenta inferni inferioris. Quemadmodum si medicus videat tibi imminentem aegritudinem forte ex aliquo labore, et dicat: Parce tibi, sic te tracta, requiesce, his cibis utere; nam si non feceris, aegrotabis: tu autem si feceris et salvus fueris, recte dicis medico: Liberasti me ab aegritudine, non in qua iam eras, sed in qua futurus eras. Nescio quis habens causam molestam mittendus erat in carcerem: venit alius, defendit eum: gratias agens, quid dicit? Eruisti animam meam de carcere. Suspendendus erat debitor, solutum est pro eo: liberatus dicitur de suspendio. In his omnibus non erant; sed quia talibus meritis agebantur ut, nisi subventum esset, ibi essent, inde recte se dicunt liberari, quo per liberatores suos non sunt permissi perduci.*

8.—Beata Virgo fuit a Christo redempta.—Porro, non potuit fieri quod Beata Virgo fuerit in tempore praeservata ab incurrenda originalis peccati labe, quin Deus ab aeterno illam praefinierit taliter praeservandam. Quod autem taliter praeservata fuerit, non est Adae adscribendum, quasi ille, ut aliqui volunt, in sua voluntate excluserit, inter suos posteros, Beatam Virginem: est enim falsus modus intelligendi transmissionem peccati originalis, quasi voluntas cuiuscumque hominis ab Adam nascituri fuerit tunc actu inclusa in illius voluntate; nec eo sensu praeservata Deipara fuit, quasi Deus ipse, pacto cum Adam inito, noluerit Filii sui Matrem includi in comminatione de universo genere per primi hominis peccatum perdendo, cum Immaculata Conceptio pendeat ex praevisis meritis Christi Domini, et decretum de Incarna-

[26] ENARR. IN PS. LXXXV, v 17, n. 18, t. IV, col. 913.

tione fuerit natura posterius, ut supra diximus,[27] decreto de lapsu.

Quocirca, melius dicendum est quod Deus, cum ab aeterno praevidisset primi hominis peccatum, quo omnes universim homines ex ipso per viam naturalis generationis nasciturі infici deberent, et cum in huius peccati remedium ordinasset Christi Domini Incarnationem, voluit et praefinivit ut ex Verbi Incarnati praevisis meritis, illa quae futura erat eius Mater, a contrahendo peccato originali alias ipsi debito, per speciale privilegium eximeretur: unde diximus quod Beatissima Virgo, nisi fuisset praeservata, debuisset, necessitate generationis seminalis ex Adam, et hoc quidem ex praeordinatione Dei permittentis ipsum Adae lapsum, originale peccatum contrahere.

Quapropter, minus recta, confusionem inducens et consequenter eliminanda est illa distinctio duplicis debiti in Beata Virgine, *remoti* scilicet et *proximi*, quatenus istud ex ipsa generationis lege, illud vero ex Dei voluntate oriatur: non enim poterat seminalis generatio peccatum originale citra Dei ordinationem inducere: unde et generaliter non est distinguendum in effectu id quod est causae primae ab eo quod est causae secundae.[28]

Unde negare quod Beata Virgo debuisset, vi suae conceptionis, contrahere peccatum originale, idem est ac diminuere universalitatem actionis redemptivae Christi; ita quod in ista hypothesi Beata Virgo decreto Dei antecedenti et absoluto et prorsus absque respectu ad Christi merita fuisset praedestinata ut immaculata conciperetur, immo ante praevisionem peccati originalis necnon ante praevisionem ipsius Incarna-

[27] Cf. supra, P. I, c. I, art. 2, p. 20.

[28] 1, Quaest. XXIII, art. 5.

tionis mysterii, quod sedulo exclusimus in prima parte.[29] Quin potius, in ordine executionis, Deus praeordinavit ut Christi Incarnatio totum rerum ordinem irradiaret, ideoque usque ad eius Genitricem extenderetur, non quidem ad hoc ut Deipara fieret, sed ad hoc ut *talis,* scilicet absque culpa originali, nasceretur.

Quapropter Maria recte ponitur ex praevisis Christi humani generis Redemptoris meritis praedestinata ab aeterno, ut a naturae labe, cui, utpote Adae filia, obnoxia tenebatur, immunis evaderet. *Certum puto convenire in eo nos omnes,* ait Suarez,[30] *Virginem, scilicet immaculatam, fuisse proprie et vere redemptam per Christum; hoc fuit fundamentum S. Thomae, in quo non ei contradicunt boni defensores Immaculatae Conceptionis, sed in consequentia quam fecit; ... nec video aut audio qui illud neget.*

De cette manière donc, ait S. Franciscus Salesius,[31] *Dieu destourna de sa glorieuse Mère toute captivité, luy donnant le bonheur des deux estatz de la nature humaine, puisqu'elle eut l'innocence que le premier Adam avoit perdue, et jouit excellemment de la rédemption que le second luy acquit; en suite dequoy, comme un jardin d'eslite qui devoit porter le fruit de vie, elle fut rendue florissante en toutes sortes de perfections, ce Filz de l'amour eternel ayant ainsi paré sa Mère de robbe d'or, récamée*[32] *en belle varieté, affin qu'elle fust la Reyne de sa dextre, c'est à dire la première de tous les esleuz, qui jouiroit des delices de la dextre divine. Si que cette Mère est son unique colombe, sa toute parfaite, sa toute lui rachetée, non seulement de la damnation, mais aussi de tout peril de la damnation, luy asseurant la grâce et la per-*

[29] Supra, p. 20.
[30] DE PECC. ORIG., disp. IX, sect. IV.
[31] TRAITE DE L'AMOUR DE DIEU, l. II, c. VI.
[32] Id e *brodée,* ital.: *ricamata*..

fection de la grâce; en sorte qu'elle marchast comme une belle aube qui, commençant à poindre, va continuellement croissant en clarté jusques au plein jour. Rédemption admirable, chef d'œuvre du Rédempteur et la première de toutes les rédemptions, par laquelle le Filz, d'un cœur vrayement filial, prévenant sa Mère es benedictions de douceur, il la prêserve non seulement du péché, comme les Anges, mais aussi de tout peril de péché et de tous les divertissemens et retardemens de l'exercice du saint amour. Aussi proteste—il qu' entre toutes les créatures raysonnables qu'il a choisies, cette Mère sacrée, comme toute reservée à son Filz, fut par chère Bienaymée hors de tout parangon[33] *et de toute comparayson.*

[33] Idem quod *comparaison*, ital.: *paragone.*

BENEDICT XV

From original painting in Caldwell Hall, Catholic University, Washington, D. C.

CHAPTER XVII

I

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

George Ott

8. Dezember.

du lieblichstes Paradies der Unschuld!

Papst Pius IX

Das Fest der unbefleckten Empfängniß.

Du Maria bist die Lilie,
Die voll Hoheit wuchs empor,
Bist des Orients schönste Blume,
Die der Himmel sich erkor.
Du allein nur wardst empfangen
Sündlos durch des Herren Huld,
Du allein nur bist geboren
Ohne Makel, ohne Schuld.*)

Der heilige Geist nennt die allerseligste Jungfrau „die Lilie unter den Dornen."**) Wer würde eine glänzend-weiße Lilie mitten unter Dorngesträuch nicht bewundern, wer an ihrem lieblichen Anblick sich nicht freuen, wer an ihrem köstlichen Wohlgeruch sich nicht ergötzen? — Was die Lilie unter den Dornen, das ist Maria, unsere theuerste Mutter, unter den Menschen. Ganz makellos, ganz rein, ganz und gar unbefleckt von jedem Hauche der Sünde, steht sie da unter der sündigen Menschheit, von Natur aus schöner, vollendeter und heiliger als selbst die Cherubim und Seraphim und das ganze Heer der Engel. Wer wird diese himmlisch-schöne Lilie nicht bewundern, wer wird an ihrem wunderlieblichen Anblicke sich nicht freuen, wer wird an dem köstlichen Wohlgeruche ihrer fleckenlosen Unschuld sich nicht ergötzen, und wer wird sich wundern, daß die Kirche ein eigenes, hohes Fest feiert zum Andenken an jene Stunde, wo Maria, diese wunderbare, engelreine Lilie im keuschen Schooße ihrer gebenedeiten Mutter Anna entsprossen ist.

Die unbefleckte Empfängniß der L. Frau! welches Herz eines Dieners der allerseligsten Jungfrau, eines Kindes der allerreinsten, theuersten Mutter, hüpft da nicht auf vor Freude und Jubel, um so mehr, da dieses

*) Muttergottes-Sträußlein von Dr. Jos. Müller.
**) Cant. 2, 2.

Geheimniß der unbefleckten Empfängniß nicht mehr eine fromme Meinung, sondern zum Glaubenssatze erhoben ist, den jeder Katholik bekennen muß, wenn er Katholik sein will.

Was versteht man aber unter der unbefleckten Empfängniß?

Man versteht einzig und allein darunter, daß Maria beim ersten Augenblicke ihres Daseins ohne die mindeste Makel der Sünde gewesen, mithin auch durch die zuvorkommende Gnade Gottes im Hinblicke auf die Verdienste ihres Sohnes Jesus Christus von der Erbsünde unberührt, ganz frei, völlig bewahrt geblieben und nicht erst nach der Empfängniß davon wieder befreit worden sei.

Die unbefleckte Empfängniß Mariä besteht also nicht darin, daß Maria vom heiligen Geiste rein und unbefleckt ihren göttlichen Sohn empfangen, denn daran zweifelt ohnehin kein Christ, auch nicht darin, daß sie im Mutterleibe erst geheiliget worden, sondern daß sie selber von ihrer heiligen Mutter Anna ohne die Erbsünde, mithin rein und unbefleckt empfangen worden sei. — Wenn der königliche Prophet David klagt: „Siehe, in Missethaten bin ich empfangen worden, und in Sünden hat mich meine Mutter empfangen," (Ps. 50.) und diese Klage alle Menschen angeht, so ist Maria davon ausgenommen, und wenn der heilige Paulus schreibt: „Alle sind wir von Natur Kinder des Zornes Gottes, weil Alle in Adam gesündiget haben, (Eph. 2, 3.; Röm. 5, 12.) so gehen diese Worte nicht Maria an; sie hatte niemals die Sünde und Schuld Adams auf sich, an ihrer Seele klebte niemals die abscheuliche Makel der Sünde der ersten Menschen. Jene „ursprüngliche Gerechtigkeit," die höchste Gabe Gottes, womit Adam und Eva aus der Hand Gottes hervorgingen und welche sie vor ihrer Sünde besaßen, aber durch ihre Sünde verloren, hatte Maria von dem ersten Augenblicke ihres Daseins an und hat sie bewahrt bis zum letzten Hauche ihres Lebens.

So alt die Verehrung der allerseligsten Jungfrau ist, — und sie beginnt schon mit den Zeiten der heiligen Apostel, — so alt ist auch die fromme Meinung der Gläubigen, daß Maria mit aller Auszeichnung einzig unter dem Menschengeschlechte dastehe und von der Erbschuld nicht berührt worden sein könne, daß sie also nicht nur rein und unbefleckt geboren, sondern rein und unbefleckt schon empfangen worden, auch nicht einen Augenblick ihres Daseins ein Gegenstand des Mißfallens Gottes, sondern immer heilig gewesen und geblieben sei, wie es von einer Mutter Gottes gar nicht anders erwartet werden kann.

Diese unbeschreibliche, über Alles erhabene Reinheit der gebenedeiten Gottesmutter konnten die heiligen Väter der Kirche nicht genug bewundern, loben und preisen. Sie nannten Maria nicht bloß unbefleckt, unverletzt, unbesudelt, schuldlos, unversehrt, unverderbt, gottgeliebt, rein, heilig, unschuldig, schön, herrlich, gesegnet, sondern auch ganz rein, ganz unbefleckt und ohne Makel, durchaus

unberührt, vollkommen unverletzt, gänzlich unversehrt, heiligste, ganz beglückt, ganz köstlich, ganz leuchtend, ganz glorreich, ganz des Lobpreises würdig. — Sie nannten sie die Schönheit der Unschuld, Behausung himmlischer Tugenden, Fundament der Heiligkeit, Heiligthum, überheilig, zehntausendfältig rein, überunschuldig, in Wahrheit hochgebenedeit, alles Lob, alle Glorie, alles Wunderbare übersteigend. — Sie sagten von ihr, sie sei die allererste unter allen Heiligen, erhabener, schöner, strahlender, geheiligter als die Engel, reiner als die Cherubim und Seraphim, reiner, unschuldiger, heiliger, glorreicher als Alles, was erschaffen ist. — Alle diese Benennungen, so erhaben sie sind, wurden dennoch überboten, wenn man bedenkt, daß die heiligen Väter Maria nannten: die Heiligkeit selbst, die Reinheit selbst, schöner als die Schönheit, heiliger als die Heiligkeit, so rein, daß sich ihre Unschuld mit dem Verstande nicht fassen, noch durch Worte würdig genug ausdrücken lasse, Abbild Gottes, Gott am allerähnlichsten, nach dem Sohne Königin des Weltalls. — Um das unvergleichliche Bild der ganz unbefleckten Jungfrau, unserer theuersten Mutter, zu malen, entlehnten die heiligen Väter ihre Farben aus dem unermeßlichen Reiche der Natur, und nannten sie: Licht, Fülle des Lichts, Aufenthalt des Lichts, leuchtender Pallast, strahlendste Leuchte, ohne Schatten, sonnengleich, unendlich reiner als die Sonne, Rosenzweig ohne Dornen, Lilie, unberührter Zweig, unzerstörte Blume, unbeflecktes Lamm, unschuldigste und heiligste, in jeder Hinsicht fleckenlose Taube. Endlich legten ihr die heiligen Väter Namen bei, so von heiligen und königlichen Gegenständen hergenommen sind: Tempel der Jungfräulichkeit, Gnadenhütte, Wohnung des heiligen Geistes, Purpurmantel von Gott selbst gewebt. *)

Diesen herrlichen Kranz der glorreichsten Titel flochten die gelehrtesten, heiligen Väter von den Apostelzeiten an aus allen Jahrhunderten unserer theuersten, makellosen Mutter. — Kein Wunder also, wenn die Gläubigen in dieses, über die ganze Welt schallende Lob der Väter der Kirche miteinstimmten, wenn sie Alles aufboten, um die unbefleckte Empfängniß der gebenedeiten Gottesmutter zu verherrlichen, und wenn sie jeden Angriff auf diesen Gnadenvorzug ihrer theuersten Mutter mit Abscheu von sich wiesen. Ja gerade die Angriffe, welche im zwölften und dreizehnten Jahrhunderte gegen dieses Privilegium der allerseligsten Jungfrau stattfanden, trugen mächtig dazu bei, den Glauben und die Andacht des katholischen Volkes zur unbefleckten Jungfrau zu mehren und zu befestigen. Kaum hatten einige Männer, von einem falschen Eifer für die Ehre Christi getäuscht, in ihren Vorträgen einige Aeußerungen fallen lassen, in ihren Schriften einige Sätze aufgestellt, die im Widerspruch gegen diesen Glauben an die unbefleckte Empfängniß standen, als sich von allen Seiten ein Schrei der Entrüstung erhob, und die widersprechenden Darstellungen und Ansichten mit Abscheu verworfen wurden. Jeder wollte seinen Eifer zeigen, den Gnadenvorzug Mariä zu vertheidigen. Nie hat man so viele Reden gehalten, so viele Bücher geschrieben, sei es, um diese Wahrheit ans hellste Licht zu setzen, sei es um mehr und mehr die Andacht zur unbefleckten Jungfrau zu erwecken; sei es endlich, um der allerseligsten Jungfrau einen Ersatz für das zu leisten, was man als einen Angriff auf ihre Würde einer unbefleckten Gottesmutter ansah. In allen Ständen und Klassen der Christenheit zeigte sich derselbe Wettstreit, ihre Glorie zu vertheidigen. Es entstanden Ritterorden, welche feierlich gelobten, zur Vertheidigung der unbefleckten Empfängniß selbst ihr Blut zu vergießen; und religiöse Vereine oder Palinods, welche sich zum Ziele setzten, die ohne Makel der Sünde empfangene Jungfrau in Gedichten und Liedern zu preisen. In Spanien begann und beginnt noch kein Prediger seine Rede, ohne folgenden Lobspruch: „Gelobt sei das allerheiligste Sakrament, und die unbefleckte Empfängniß der Jungfrau Maria, Unsere Frau, die ohne Erbsünde im ersten Augenblicke ihres natürlichen und wirklichen Lebens empfangen worden. Amen."

Als sich in diesem Lande einst ein gewisser Prediger einer Stadt herausnahm, gegen die unbefleckte Empfängniß zu predigen, mißfiel dieß den Großen und Kleinen so sehr, daß auf Aufforderung des Stadtamtes und der Geistlichkeit ein berühmter Lehrer die Kanzel bestieg, um die Ehre der heil. Jungfrau zu wahren, was er zur allgemeinen Freude that. Damit war aber die Stadt noch nicht zufrieden; sie reichte der Königin des Himmels ein reiches Gewebe, achtzigtausend Dukaten werth, worauf die Worte in Buchstaben von Diamanten und anderen kostbaren Steinen standen: „Die Mutter Gottes ist ohne Sünde empfangen."

Die berühmtesten Hochschulen erklärten sich feierlichst für den Glauben an die unbefleckte Empfängniß; die meisten verpflichteten sich durch einen Eid, sie zu vertheidigen, und nahmen nur jene als Mitglieder auf, die diesen Eid leisteten. — Die geistlichen Orden der Franziskaner, Jesuiten ꝛc., machten es sich zur besonderen Aufgabe, die Andacht zur unbefleckten Jungfrau überallhin zu verbreiten, und mit Wort und Schrift zu vertheidigen. Von allen Seiten schickten katholische Fürsten Gesandschaften an den heiligen Stuhl, um denselben um eine, ihrer und ihrer Unterthanen Frömmigkeit entsprechende Entscheidung zu bitten. Denn immer noch war die unbefleckte Empfängniß nur eine fromme, wenn auch allgemeine Meinung.

Sie beschworen den Stellvertreter Jesu Christi, er möge auf immer Jedem, wer es auch sei, den Mund verschließen, der das in Zweifel zu ziehen wage, was der Glaube Aller sei. Philipp III., König von Spanien, erlangte vom Papst Paul V. durch seinen Gesandten eine Bulle, durch welche verboten wurde, eine mit der unbefleckten Empfängniß in Widerspruch stehende Meinung öffentlich zu vertheidigen. Diese Bulle wurde mit Ungeduld erwartet, mit Begeisterung aufgenommen. Man feierte deßhalb ein Fest, das einen ganzen Monat dauerte. Man stiftete eine Bruderschaft zu Ehren der unbefleckten Empfängniß und die Prinzen und Großen traten derselben

*) Passaglia: De immaculato Deiparae semper Virginis conceptu.

bei. König Karl II. ließ das glorreiche Geheimniß auf seine Fahne setzen; König Ludwig XIV. von Frankreich führte mit Erlaubniß des heiligen apostolischen Stuhles eine Oktave des Festes der unbefleckten Empfängniß in seinem ganzen Reiche ein, und Kaiser Ferdinand III. von Oesterreich stellte sich, seine Kinder, sein Kriegsheer und sein ganzes Land feierlich unter den Schutz der unbefleckt empfangenen Jungfrau. —

Bereits zeigte eine Reihe frommer Päpste, daß sie die Meinung des katholischen Volkes theile, aber erst dem frommen Papst Pius IX., diesen glühenden Verehrer der allzeit unbefleckten Jungfrau, war es vorbehalten, die bisherige Meinung zu einem Glaubensartikel zu erheben und damit den strahlendsten Edelstein in die Krone der Himmelskönigin zu setzen.

Er ist geboren zu Sinigaglia, am 13. Mai 1792, und stammt aus der gottesfürchtigen Familie der Grafen von Mastai Ferretti. Schon frühe erhielt er von der heiligen Jungfrau die größten Gnadenbezeigungen. Er fühlte sich zum geistlichen Stande berufen und hatte auch vor dem Bilde der Lieben Frau das Gelübde abgelegt, sich diesem Sande zu widmen. Zu Rom begann er seine geistlichen Studien. Aber an einer bejammenswerthen Krankheit leidend, hoffte er nicht, das Priesteramt verwalten zu können. Bevor er daher die erste höhere Weihe erhielt, besuchte er den Papst Pius VII., seinen Verwandten, und entdeckte ihm seinen traurigen Zustand. Der heil. Vater antwortete ihm: „Mein Sohn, habe Vertrauen; bete zur heil. Jungfrau und du wirst immer vorwärts kommen.“ Auf die Worte des Papstes bin empfing er also die zwei ersten höheren Weihen, aber seine Gesundheit blieb immer dieselbe. Acht Tage vor seiner Priesterweihe besuchte er den Papst abermals und theilte ihm seine Befürchtungen im Betreff seiner Gesundheit mit. Der Papst antwortete ihm zum Zweitenmale: „Mein Sohn, habe Vertrauen, empfehle dich täglich der heil. Jungfrau. Beginne heute ein neuntägiges Gebet zu ihrer Ehre; wir werden es auch thun. Bleibe in dieser Zeit in ruhiger Zurückgezogenheit, empfange in Ruhe und Vertrauen die heil. Priesterweihe, lies deine erste heilige Messe mit Freude und du wirst sehen, daß Alles gut gehen werde.“

Pius zog sich getröstet zurück und trat einen Augenblick in die St. Petrskirche, um dort vor dem Grabe des Fürsten der Apostel zu beten. Hierauf verrichtete er in seiner Zurückgezogenheit das neuntägige Gebet zur heiligen Jungfrau mit gränzenlosem Vertrauen, empfing die Priesterweihe, hielt seine erste heilige Messe und seine Gesundheit war seitdem gut und günstig. „So,“ sagt einer seiner Lebensbeschreiber, „machte ihn die heil. Jungfrau zum Priester und (später) zum Papste.“

Seine Liebe und sein Eifer für die Verehrung der Gottesmutter zeigten sich glanzvoll, als er Bischof von Imola geworden. Da war es seine Glückseligkeit, seine Heerde mit der Milch der zärtlichsten Andacht zu Maria zu nähren. Er ehrte und liebte alle Vorrechte seiner theuersten Mutter, aber namentlich entflammte sein Eifer, wenn es sich um die unbefleckte Empfängniß handelte. Dieses allen christlichen Herzen so theuere Vorrecht war für ihn der Gegenstand besonderer und ganz herzlicher Liebe, und er predigte unabläßig darüber und empfahl seine Verehrung allen Gläubigen.

Als er Papst geworden, erhielt sein Eifer für den Ruhm Mariens neuen Zuwachs. Die Erhebung der unbefleckten Empfängniß zu einem Glaubensartikel wurde seine wichtigste Angelegenheit. Schon lange hatte er in Demuth um Erleuchtung hierüber gebetet, und ein unnennbarer Trost kam in seine Seele, als er sah, wie wunderbar in der ganzen katholischen Welt der Wunsch erwachte, die bisher fromme Meinung zu einem Glaubensartikel erhoben zu sehen, wie die Bischöfe, die Domkapitel, die religiösen Orden wetteiferten in den Gottesdiensten und Andachten, davon Erwähnung zu thun, und mehrere hervorragende Männer der Gottesgelehrtheit durch ihre Schriften ein glänzendes Licht auf dieses herrliche Privilegium der Gottesmutter verbreiteten.

Unterdessen vertrieb den gütigen Vater Pius die Revolution aus Rom und seinen Staaten. Er suchte und fand einen Zufluchtsort im Königreich Neapel in der Stadt und Festung Gaeta. — Während seines Aufenthalts dortselbst vergaß er die große Angelegenheit nicht, womit sein Herz immer beschäftiget war; „denn“, sagte er in dem Rundschreiben, welches er von Gaeta aus an alle Bischöfe des Erdkreises erließ,*) „Wir hegen das feste Vertrauen, daß die allerseligste Jungfrau, welche durch die Größe ihrer Verdienste über alle Chöre der Engel bis zum Throne Gottes erhoben wurde, welche unter ihrem Fuße den Kopf der alten Schlange zertrat, und welche gestellt zwischen Christus und die Kirche, voll Gnade und Wohlwollen das christliche Volk stets vor Unheil, wie vor den Schlingen und den Angriffen aller seiner Feinde beschützt und es vor dem Untergange gerettet hat, auch Uns mit der unendlichen Liebe ihres mütterlichen Herzens in Schutz nehmen und durch ihre inständige und mächtige Fürbitte bei Gott von Uns die traurigen und beklagenswerthen Unfälle, die ängstigende Beklemmung, die Mühsale und Leiden, welche über Uns hereingebrochen, wieder abwenden werde. Ebenso hoffen wir, daß sie die Geißel des göttlichen Zornes, welche Uns wegen Unserer Sünden züchtiget, abzuleiten und die Wetterwolken, welche von allen Seiten zum großen Schmerze Unserer Seele gegen die Kirche drohend heranziehen, zu sänftigen und zu zerstreuen und endlich Unsern Kummer in Freude zu verwandeln Uns würdigen werde. . . . Unser ganzes Vertrauen beruht auf der heiligen Jungfrau, auf welche Gott die Fülle alles Guten ausgegossen, so daß, wenn Uns irgend eine Hoffnung, irgend eine Gunst, irgend ein Heil widerfährt, so wissen Wir, daß es von ihr komme, weil dies der Wille dessen ist, der da wollte, daß wir Alles durch die heil. Jungfrau hätten.“

Zugleich ermunterte der heilige Vater in demselben Schreiben alle Bischöfe, daß sie feierliche Gebete veranstalteten und bat sie dringend, ihm zu schreiben oder viel-

*) 2. Februar 1849.

mehr ihm zu sagen, wie beschaffen die Verehrung für die unbefleckte Empfängniß in ihren Bisthümern, und welches ihr Wunsch und Wille sei in Betreff dieser Erklärung.

Die Hoffnung, welche der heilige Vater auf die mächtige Jungfrau gesetzt hatte, ward nicht getäuscht. Sie zerstreute den Sturm, der ihn in der Verbannung hielt. Der Aufstand in der Stadt Rom wurde durch die französischen Soldaten unterdrückt, und um zu zeigen, daß dies das Werk Maria's war, ereignete sich die Besetzung der Stadt und die Niederlage der Feinde des heiligen Stuhles gerade am Feste Mariä Heimsuchung am 2. Juli. Zum Danke und zum Andenken an dieses Ereigniß erhob Papst Pius IX. die Feier dieses Festes zu einem Festtage zweiter Klasse nach dem Kirchengebrauche.

Endlich beschloß der geliebte Papst, dem sehnlichem Wunsche seines Herzens nachzukommen und so vielen Bitten und Aufforderungen der Bischöfe, Fürsten und Gläubigen zu willfahren.

Im Jahre 1854 wurden die Bischöfe der katholischen Welt eingeladen, sich nach Rom zu begeben zur Zeit des jährlichen Festes der Empfängniß Mariens, um die Huldigung, die Pius der Himmelskönigin darbringen wollte, glanzvoller und herrlicher zu machen. Und um in reichlicherem Maaße die Erleuchtung und den Beistand des Himmels zu erhalten, ordnete er neue Gebete an und gab einen Jubiläumsablaß für die ganze Kirche. Es gab außerdem in diesem Jahre eine Menge Unglück. Hunger, Pest und Krieg verheerten viele Länder. Er hielt es für das beste Heilmittel dieser Uebel, wenn er die Verehrung und den Ruhm der heiligsten und unbefleckten Jungfrau erhöhe.

Der schönste Tag seines Lebens brach an. Niemals vielleicht hatte ein Papst einen bitterern Kelch des Leidens zu leeren, als Pius IX.; aber auch niemals erhielt ein Papst einen größeren Antheil an dem Ruhme des Erlösers. Der 8. Dezember 1854 verlieh ihm unermeßliche Freude und knüpfte an seinen Namen unermeßlichen Ruhm. Bereits waren die Bischöfe der katholischen Welt, welchen es die Sorge um ihre Heerde gestattete, in Rom angekommen, und am Morgen des 8. Dezembers zählte die heilige Stadt in ihren Mauern einhundert sechs und siebenzig Cardinäle, Patriarchen, Erzbischöfe und Bischöfe. Alle Völker der Erde waren unter ihnen vertreten, mehrere kamen tausende von Stunden aus dem Inneren Chinas, andere aus Amerika, noch andere von den Inseln des stillen Meeres.

Die heilige Handlung sollte in der Basilika des heil. Petrus, der Hauptkirche der Welt, vor sich gehen. Das schon an sich herrliche Gotteshaus war außerdem noch prächtig geschmückt. Von Tagesanbruch an füllte eine unzählige Menge Gläubiger aus allen Theilen der Welt die ungeheueren Räume. Gegen neun Uhr öffneten sich die Thore des apostolischen Palastes, und in langer, ehrfurchtgebietender Prozession zogen paarweise die Cardinäle, Patriarchen, Erzbischöfe, Bischöfe, die Prälaten jeden Ranges, alle bekleidet mit den Zeichen ihrer hohen Würde und die Mitra auf dem Haupte, langsam in die Peterskirche, woselbst der heil. Vater die Feier des heil. Meßopfers begann. — Nach dem Evangelium hielt der Papst mit den Gebeten der heil. Messe inne und setzte sich auf seinen Thron. Einige Augenblicke darauf naheten sich demselben die Abgeordneten der bischöflichen Versammlung, um sich dem hl. Vater zu Füssen zu werfen; es waren: der Dekan des Cardinal-Collegiums, der älteste Erzbischof, der älteste Bischof, nebst dem Patriarchen und zwei Bischöfen der griechischen Kirche.

Diese erhabenen Kirchenfürsten richteten die letzte Bitte im Namen der ganzen Christenheit an den Stellvertreter Christi, er möge als Glaubenssatz erklären: daß die allerseligste Jungfrau, die Mutter unsers Herrn Jesu Christi, des Schöpfers und Erlösers, von der allgemeinen Makel der Sünde unsers Stammvaters ausgenommen und daher unbefleckt empfangen worden sei.

Nachdem die Kirchenfürsten diese Bitte dem Papste vorgelegt, erhob sich dieser von seinem Sitze und stimmte den Hymnus: „Komm heiliger Geist" an. Mächtig erscholl der Gesang der Bischöfe und Priester, alle Gläubige stimmten in den herrlichen Gesang ein. — Man war zu Ende; von den Gewölben der Peterskirche tönten die letzten Wiederklänge der heiligen Hymne; tiefes, feierliches Stillschweigen lag auf der im stillen Gebete harrenden Menge. Da erhob sich plötzlich, wie eine Stimme vom Himmel, die Stimme des Papstes Pius IX. mit ihrem tiefen, harmonischen Klange:

„Unter Eingebung des heiligen Geistes, zur Ehre der heiligen und untheilbaren Dreieinigkeit, zur Zierde und zum Ruhme der jungfräulichen Gottesgebärerin, zur Erhöhung des katholischen Glaubens und zur Mehrung der christlichen Religion, kraft der Autorität unsers Herrn Jesu Christi, der heiligen Apostel Petrus und Paulus und der Unsrigen erklären Wir, sprechen aus und entscheiden, daß die Lehre, welche dafür hält, daß die seligste Jungfrau Maria beim ersten Augenblicke ihrer Empfängniß durch besondere Gnade und Vorrecht des allmächtigen Gottes, im Hinblicke auf die Verdienste Christi Jesu, des Erlösers des Menschengeschlechtes, von aller Makel der Erbschuld bewahrt worden sei, von Gott geoffenbart und darum von allen Gläubigen fest und standhaft geglaubt werden müsse."

Die Bewegung des heiligen Vaters während dieser feierlichen Verkündigung war so groß, daß mehrmals Schluchzen seine Stimme erstickte und ihn die Worte zu unterbrechen zwang. In allen Augen standen Thränen und selbst Leute, welche nur die Neugierde zu der heiligen Handlung geführt, waren unwillkürlich durch diese tiefe, ächt christliche Bewegung ergriffen.

Das ist noch nicht Alles. Der fromme Papst hielt eine goldene, mit den werthvollsten Edelsteinen besetzte Krone bereit. Nach der heiligen Messe und dem Te Deum

weihte er sie an dem Altare des Bekenntnisses von St. Peter, um sie, unter Vorantritt seines erhabenen Gefolges zur verehrten Madonna zu tragen, die auf dem Hauptaltare der Stiftsherren steht. Er stieg auf eine, der Madonna gegenüber errichtete Estrade (Bühne) und mit seinen geweihten Händen setzte er selbst die Krone auf ihre Stirne in Gegenwart des ganzen Hofes der streitenden Kirche. Das war ein lebendiges und besonderes Sinnbild der neuen Ruhmeskrone, welches so eben das päpstliche Dekret auf das Haupt der ohne Sünde empfangenen Gottesmutter gesetzt.

Die Kunde von der neuen, seit Jahrhunderten ersehnten Verherrlichung der allerseligsten unbefleckt empfangenen Frau durch den Statthalter Christi auf Erden durcheilte schnell die ganze katholische Welt; in allen Ländern des Erdkreises wurde sie mit Jubel empfangen, und es gab keinen Dom, keine Kirche, keine Kapelle, keinen Altar der Lieben Frau, wo nicht Gebete und Gesänge des Dankes für dieses neue, glänzende Vorrecht der Gottesmutter zum Himmel emporstieg. Papst Pius IX. sprach die feierliche Erklärung aus, und zweihundert Millionen Katholiken beugten ihren Geist und ihr Herz unter sein Wort, und aus der Tiefe der Seele tönte die Antwort Credo! „Ich glaube!“

Rom besonders, die Hauptstadt der Christenheit, schwamm in einem Meere von Freude; die 36 Liebfrauenkirchen daselbst erschallten vom Dankesjubel der Andächtigen, und zum ewigen Andenken an das ewig denkwürdige Ereigniß beschloß man, die ganze katholische Christenheit zur Errichtung einer Säule einzuladen, welche nicht bloß die Erinnerung an diesen Akt verewigen, sondern auch die gläubige Unterwerfung aller Gläubigen der Erde unter den Ausspruch des Papstes beurkunden sollte. — Auf die geschehene Einladung folgten aus allen Ländern der Welt zahlreiche Liebesopfer, um die Kosten für die Säule zu decken, und am 6. Mai 1855 wurde der Grundstein gelegt. — Der berühmte Bildhauer Obici fertigte das Modell der prachtvollen Statue der heiligen Jungfrau, welche die Säule zieren sollte und De Rossi goß sie in Erz. Auf einem der schönsten öffentlichen Plätze Roms, auf der Piazza di Spagna (dem spanischen Platz), welchen das herrliche Gebäude des Collegium Romanum*) und der Pallast des spanischen Gesandten schmücken, erhob sich an seinem prachtvollen Fußgestelle, dessen Ecken mit den Statuen der Propheten aus weißem Marmor geziert sind, eine hohe Säule, und auf dieser die Statue der unbefleckten Jungfrau. Sie ruht in einer Größe von 22 Fuß auf einer von den Sinnbildern der vier Evangelisten getragenen Kugel.

Ihr Fuß zertritt die Schlange, ihr sanfter Blick ist gegen den Himmel gerichtet, die rechte Hand etwas erhoben, die linke zur Erde gesenkt. Sie scheint sagen zu wollen: „Herr, ich danke dir, daß du mich so verherrlichet hast; aber ich empfehle die Welt deiner Barmherzigkeit.“ Weit und majestätisch ist der Mantel, von dem sie umhüllt ist. Der Ausdruck der Glückseligkeit ist erhaben, das Antlitz heiter und anziehend.

Wie bereits erwähnt, befindet sich auf der Piazza di Spagna der Pallast des spanischen Gesandten, und von da aus beschloß der heilige Vater die feierliche Einweihung des Monumentes vorzunehmen, das zur Erinnerung an die Erhebung der Lehre von der unbefleckten Empfängniß Mariens zu einem Glaubensartikel errichtet wurde und als redender Zeuge davon für ewige Zeiten dastehen soll. Das Fest Mariä Geburt wurde zur Feier ausersehen. Schon am frühesten Morgen des 8. Septembers 1857 war in Rom Alles in froher Bewegung; mehr als 50,000 Menschen waren aus der Umgegend herbeigeeilt und bemühten sich ein Plätzchen zu gewinnen, um die erhabene Weihehandlung zu sehen.

Die spanische Gesandtschaft bot Alles auf, um ihren Pallast zu schmücken. An der Vorderseite des Gebäudes war längs der ganzen Fronte eine prachtvolle Bühne errichtet: die mit Inschriften versehenen bildlichen Ausschmückungen derselben stellten die spanischen Provinzen vor, die dem Statthalter Christi auf Erden für die Erklärung des Glaubensartikels der unbefleckten Empfängniß ihre Glückwünsche darbringen. Rechts an dem Baldachin, unter welchem der heilige Vater Platz nehmen sollte, stellte ein

*) In diesen Gebäuden werden junge Leute aus allen Welttheilen zu Missionären herangebildet.

2651 9. Dezember.

erhabenes Bild Papst Pius IX. in dem Momente dar, in welchem er in Gegenwart der Fürsten von Toskana und Modena die Bischöfe dieser Länder anspricht; links von dem Baldachin zeigte ein zweites Bild den Papst, wie er die Bitten und Wünsche seiner Provinzen entgegennimmt. Zu beiden Seiten dieser Bilder waren noch andere, die Tugenden des heil. Vaters darstellend, angebracht. Das Innere des Hofes war ebenfalls in prachtvoller Weise geschmückt.

Gegen halb 10 Uhr Vormittags begab sich Se. Heiligkeit nebst Gefolge aus dem Vatikan zuerst in die Kirche St. Maria del Populo, um dort, wie alljährlich, der heil. Messe beizuwohnen und sodann mit seinem Kardinal-Kollegium den ziemlich weiten Weg nach dem Monumente zu Fuß in Prozession fortzusetzen. An der großen Treppe des Pallastes von dem spanischen Gesandten empfangen, verfügte sich Pius IX. in den eigens da hergerichteten Saal, um daselbst die priesterlichen Gewande anzuziehen und zog dann in Prozession mit den Prälaten und den Kardinälen nach der Bühne, auf welcher die höchsten Würdenträger und Adeligen ihren Platz eingenommen hatten. — Der heilige Vater bestieg hierauf den Thron, und sprach die vorgeschriebenen Weihegebete, hierauf besprengte und beräucherte er das 22 Fuß hohe Bild der heil. Jungfrau, stimmte dann den Hymnus Ave Maris stella an, das die Sänger der päpstlichen Kapelle fortsetzten, sprach dann abermals die geeigneten Gebete und ertheilte unter dem Geläute aller Glocken der versammelten Volksmenge schließlich den apostolischen Segen. So steht nun dieses herrliche Denkmal da als Erinnerung an den Glaubenssatz der unbefleckten Empfängniß und als ein Zeichen der frommen Verehrung, welche die Gläubigen, der heil. Vater an der Spitze, zur seligsten Himmelskönigin tragen.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES

Original statue modelled under Bernadette's direction

II

LOURDES

"I am the Immaculate Conception"

Une opinion, tenace comme une certitude, régnait à Lourdes et dans toute la contrée environnante relativement aux visions : c'était que la Dame de la Grotte n'avait pas dit son dernier mot. Les merveilles des extases, le jaillissement extraordinaire de la fontaine, les récits et les ambassades de la voyante demeuraient en effet, sans explication suffisante, si l'Apparition continuait à se taire sur son nom et sur le but de ses visites. Or, les personnes qui analysaient les évènements se refusaient à croire qu'un drame, dont toutes les données étaient célestes, pût se terminer sans laisser dans les esprits autre chose que le souvenir brillant, mais stérile, d'une représentation théâtrale. La période du 4 au 24 mars s'était néanmoins écoulée, et aucun fait nouveau n'était venu dissiper les nuages, ni précipiter le dénouement attendu.

En ce dernier jour, veille de l'Annonciation, un souffle du ciel passa dans toute la région, invitant les âmes pieuses à se rendre, le lendemain, à la Grotte de Massabieille. D'habitude, ces âmes, aux fêtes consacrées à la Vierge, allaient porter leurs prières et retremper leur dévotion soit à l'antique et pieux sanctuaire de Garaison, soit au sanctuaire non moins

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* Taken from: Les apparitions de Lourdes. Souvenirs intimes d'un témoin. Par J. B. Estrade. Lourdes, 1906.

ancien et non moins vénéré de Bétharram. (1) A cet appel, qui les détournait de leur pèlerinage traditionnel, elles éprouvèrent un moment de trouble et se demandèrent s'il leur était bien permis d'abandonner des oratoires déjà consacrés, pour se porter vers des lieux où la prière liturgique n'avait pas encore résonné. La Dame du rocher, par une de ces illuminations dont elle avait le secret, fit comprendre aux personnes hésitantes qu'elle était la même que Celle qu'on invoquait aux anciens sanctuaires de la contrée, et que, par conséquent, leurs hommages allaient au même but. A l'instant les scrupules cessèrent, et, quand il fallut se mettre en route, les pas des pèlerins se dirigèrent vers Lourdes.

Il faut cependant le dire, on ne vit pas à la Grotte, ce jour-là, les grandes foules des apparitions précédentes. On y remarquait plutôt, avec quelques hommes agenouillés çà et là, une riche couronne de jeunes vierges et de pieuses mères, faisant une garde d'honneur à la Dame cachée. En obéissant à l'impulsion intérieure qu'elles avaient ressentie, toutes ces âmes d'élite s'étaient pénétrées de la pensée que quelque grand événément se préparait à la Grotte. A l'avance elles se demandaient quel pouvait être cet évènement? La Dame mystérieuse allait-elle déchirer les voiles qui la couvraient et se présenter, comme on l'avait espéré le 4 mars, dans toutes les splendeurs de sa gloire et l'éclat de ses divines perfections? Ferait-elle jaillir de la nouvelle fontaine probatique coulant sous ses yeux un de ces prodiges qui apportent la guérison et la joie aux cœurs souffrants? Prendrait-elle occasion de la fête du jour, dont le vocable (l'Annonciation) semblait être

(1) Deux lieux de pèlerinage très populaires dans les Hautes et les Basses-Pyrénées: l'un, situé à la partie orientale du diocèse de Tarbes; l'autre, à l'ouest, dans la circonscription du diocèse de Bayonne.

une promesse, pour déclarer son nom et révéler son origine céleste? Toutes ces hypothèses se présentaient à l'esprit des pèlerins et y faisaient l'objet de mille vœux et de mille espérances.

La voix qui s'était fait entendre aux amis de la Vierge avait retenti du même coup, mais d'une manière plus intime et plus suave, dans le cœur de Bernadette. Oh! pour l'enfant, cette voix n'était pas une voix étrangère; c'était la messagère fidèle qui prenait toujours les devants pour annoncer la visite de la Dame aux célestes sourires.

Depuis les jours heureux de la quinzaine des apparitions, la petite voyante était allée s'agenouiller plusieurs fois sous le rocher béni. Cédant aux aspirations de son âme, souvent elle élevait son regard vers la niche bien-aimée; hélas! la niche demeurait toujours vide, et les rayons du ciel ne veaient plus l'éclairer. Qu'on juge de la joie de Bernadette quand elle comprit que la divine Mère l'appelait à un nouveau rendez-vous. Peu importaient à l'enfant les calculs et les prévisions du dehors sur ce que ferait ou ne ferait pas la Dame. Sa foi, à elle, était établie, et elle n'avait d'autre désir que celui de contempler, de savourer les charmes de l'auguste Souveraine qui résumait en sa personne toutes les grâces et toutes les beautés du ciel.

Auprès de l'âtre de famille, dans la veillée du 24 mars, Bernadette fit part à ses parents de l'avis intérieur qu'elle avait reçu et parla, comme d'une chose assurée, du bonheur qui l'attendait, le lendemain, à la Grotte.

Toute pleine de cette pensée, elle alla se reposer, mais le sommeil ne put arriver à ses paupières. La nuit lui parut longue, et bien des *Ave Maria* du chapelet passèrent sur ses lèvres. Aussitôt que les premières lueurs du jour parurent,

elle quitta sa couchette, s'habilla avec diligence et, sans écouter son asthme qui se réveillait dans sa petite poitrine, elle prit, d'un pas agile, le chemin de Massabieille. O confusion pour elle! la niche était déjà illuminée et la Dame attendait!... "Elle était là, disait Bernadette, paisible, souriante et regardant la foule comme une mère affectueuse regarde ses enfants."

La voyante ajoutait:

"Quand je fus à genoux devant la Dame, je lui demandai pardon de ce que j'arrivais en retard. Toujours bonne pour moi, elle me fit signe de la tête que je n'avais pas besoin de m'excuser. Alors je lui exprimai toutes mes affections, tous mes respects et le bonheur que j'avais de la revoir. Après l'avoir entretenue de tout ce qui me vint dans le cœur, je pris mon chapelet. Pendant que j'étais en prière, la pensée de lui demander son nom se présenta à mon esprit avec une persistance qui me faisait oublier toutes les autres pensées. Je craignais de me rendre importune en réitérant une demande toujours demeurée sans réponse, et cependant quelque chose m'obligeait à parler. Enfin, d'un mouvement que je ne pus contenir, les paroles sortirent de ma bouche, et je priai la Dame de vouloir bien me dire qui elle était. (1)

"Comme à mes précédentes questions, la Dame inclina la tête, sourit, mais ne répondit pas. Je ne sais pourquoi, je me sentis plus courageuse, et je revins à lui demander la grâce de me faire connaître son nom.

"Elle renouvela son sourire et sa gracieuse salutation, mais elle continua à garder le silence.

"Une troisième fois, les mains jointes et tout en me recon-

(1) Bernadette n'indiquait pas en quels termes elle avait formulé sa demande.

naissant indigne de la faveur que je réclamais, je recommençai ma prière."

Arrivée à ce point de sa narration, l'enfant était gagnée par l'émotion, et elle continuait ainsi :

"La Dame se tenait debout au-dessus du rosier et se montrait comme elle se montre dans la médaille miraculeuse. A ma troisième demande elle prit un air grave et parut s'humilier... Elle joignit ensuite ses mains et les porta sur le haut de la poitrine.... elle regarda le ciel... ; puis séparant lentement les mains et se penchant vers moi, elle me dit en laissant trembler sa voix :

Je suis l'Immaculée Conception !" (1)

En prononçant ces dernières paroles, Bernadette baissait la tête et reproduisait le geste de la Dame.

Le grand mystère de la Grotte était enfin dévoilé ! Et en quel jour ! Précisément en l'anniversaire du jour trois fois béni où l'archange Gabriel vint, de la part du Très-Haut, annoncer la venue prochaine du Rédempteur attendu, et saluer "pleine de grâce", c'est-à-dire *Immaculée,* la Femme prédestinée qui, d'après l'antique promesse faite à nos premiers parents, devait écraser la tête du serpent maudit. Quelle coïncidence ! Et pour nous quel sujet d'espérances ! Anges qui entouriez la Vierge dans sa niche rustique, quelles furent vos louanges et vos félicitations en entendant votre auguste Souveraine se désigner et se personnifier dans l'un de ses plus beaux titres de gloire ? Ne fîtes-vous pas retentir les voûtes de Massabieille des accords de vos lyres vibrantes et des acclamations de vos cœurs enflammés ?

(1) En patois: *Qué soy èr'Immaculada Counceptiou.*

Les pèlerins agenouillés à la Grotte n'entendirent ni les harmonies, ni les transports des esprits bienheureux; mais ils se sentirent pénétrés de saintes et suaves allégresses. Durant l'extase, ils se tinrent suspendus aux lèvres de la voyante, espérant que de cette bouche pure descendrait à chaque instant quelque mot révélateur. Quand Bernadette eut parlé, un saisissement indéfinissable s'empara de toutes les âmes, et les assistants tombèrent à genoux. Après avoir rendu ce premier hommage à la Vierge, transportés d'enthousiasme, les uns allaient déposer leurs baisers sur les parois de la roche bénie, les autres allaient serrer dans leurs bras, comme un être animé ou des reliques saintes, les branches de l'églantier, qui tombaient de la niche. Du milieu de la foule, des îlots du Gave, du haut du mamelon, s'élevait l'invocation populaire: *O Marie, conçue sans péché, priez pour nous qui avons recours à vous!*

Quelques minutes après l'apparition, la ville de Lourdes était remplie de la grande nouvelle apportée par la jeune voyante. En se rencontrant dans les rues, les habitants se serraient la main et se congratulaient les uns les autres comme d'un heureux évènement arrivé à chacun d'eux.

Quant aux pèlerins étrangers, ils ne savaient plus se détacher de la Grotte; lorsqu'ils avaient récité un chapelet, ils en récitaient un second, et après avoir chanté, ils chantaient encore. Enfin, vers la chute du jour, ils se dispersèrent dans toutes les directions, proclamant partout sur leur passage les paroles de la Vierge.

Dans l'après-midi du 25 mars (je ne me rappelle plus les circonstances qui en firent naître l'occasion), nous eûmes inopinément, ma sœur et moi, la visite de la petite Bernadette. Un ange serait entré dans la maison qu'il ne vous eût pas

procuré une joie plus profonde et plus vive. C'est que la jeune voyante était aussi un ange, et au moment où elle se présenta chez nous, on aurait dit qu'elle exhalait encore les parfums de la Rose mystique. On devine les pensées qui devaient nous occuper; notre conversation avec l'enfant ne pouvait rouler que sur les évènements de la Grotte. Aussitôt après que nous eûmes donné la bienvenue à notre affectionnée visiteuse, nous nous empressâmes de lui demander les détails intimes de la vision du matin. Quelque chose d'heureux passa sur sa figure, et, sans se faire attendre, Bernadette se mit à raconter, les incidents que l'on connaît déjà. L'attitude et les gestes de la Vierge furent reproduits d'une manière si vraie et si saisissante, que le divin modèle parut se dessiner vivant devant nos yeux. Vers la fin du récit, l'enfant fut prise d'un grand attendrissement; elle s'arrêta un instant; puis, les larmes aux yeux et le tremblement dans la voix, elle nous répéta, avec une expression séraphique, la réponse à jamais mémorarable de la Vierge: *Je suis l'Immaculée Conception!*

En consignant ici la scène que je viens de décrire, je ne me proposais pas seulement de m'arrêter à un souvenir qui m'est doux; je voulais surtout donner une nouvelle preuve de la sincérité de Bernadette.

La pauvre enfant ne savait pas articuler le mot *conception,* qu'elle prononçait *con-chep-tion.* (1) D'autre part, elle ignorait ce que voulaient dire les paroles de la Vierge: "Je suis l'Immaculée Conception." (2)

Quand elle eut fini de parler, ma sœur redressa le mot "conception" qu'elle venait d'estropier. L'enfant se reprit, puis

(1) En patois: *Coun-chet-siou.*

(2) Bernadette savait bien que l'appellation d'*Immaculée Conception* se rapportait à la Sainte Vierge, mais elle ignorait le sens littéral de cette expression.

elle se tourna vers ma sœur et lui demanda avec une ingénuité embarrassée :

"Mais, Mademoiselle, que veulent dire ces paroles : Je suis l'Immaculée Conception ?"

Après une telle question, qui pourrait douter de la véracité de Bernadette ! On ment avec des mots que l'on connaît, mais non avec des mots dont on ignore le sens.

PART III

FOREWORD TO PART III

On December 8, 1854, Pius IX put an end forever to all controversy on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, by the infallible declaration that "the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace of the Omnipotent God, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of mankind, was preserved free from all stain of original sin," and that this doctrine *"has been revealed by God* and must, therefore, be firmly and constantly believed by all the faithful."

It is, then, to the interest of the inquiring student, not of controversy, that we give in Part III a compilation of documents and references pertaining to the feast and the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. In such a vast historical, doctrinal and devotional field as this we cannot claim more that merely suggest to further research. And if our work be of aid, even in a small way, to a greater knowledge and love of God's Immaculate Mother, we shall feel amply rewarded for the time and labor expended in this compilation.

MARY IMMACULATE

Patroness of the Catholic University of America

PART III

CHAPTER XVIII

Documentary Evidence in Favor of the Immaculate Conception

THE COUNCIL OF BASLE

Mgr. J. B. Malou

Premières instances pour obtenir la définition de l'Immaculée Conception de Marie, faites au concile de Bâle, au XV^e^ *siècle. Motifs allégués à cette époque en faveur du décret dogmatique.*

Quoique le concile de Bâle ait fini par un schisme, à son origine il était légitime. Le Souverain Pontife avait consenti à ce qu'il fût convoqué; il y envoya ses légats *a latere* avec les pouvoirs les plus étendus, et il se fit rendre un compte exact de tous les travaux des Pères.

On a prétendu qu'Eugène IV avait chargé ses légats d'examiner la question de l'Immaculée Conception de la sainte Vierge dans le concile de Bâle, et qu'il les avait autorisés à prêter la main à une décision définitive, dont la sanction lui était nécessairement réservée. Ce fait n'est point consigné dans les documents de l'époque que j'ai pu consulter; mais il n'a rien d'invraisemblable, tant à cause de la présence des légats du Sainte-Siége aux discussions qui ont précédé le décret relatif à l'Immaculée Conception de la très-sainte Vierge, qu'à cause de la part que le Saint-Siége a prise à tous les travaux du concile, antérieurs au schisme.

Une des premières questions que les théologiens de France, d'Espagne et d'Allemagne, soulevèrent, fut la question de l'Immaculée Conception, dont ils sollicitèrent la définition

dogmatique. Ce fut en 1435, dès que le concile fut régulièrement constitué. Le cardinal Louis d'Arles, juge de la foi, déféra la question à la congrégation du concile chargée de la discussion des matières de foi, congrégation qu'il présidait.

Le concile avait formé quatre congrégations, appelées *saintes députations,* l'une de la foi, l'autre de la paix, une troisième de la réforme, la dernière pour les choses ordinaires et communes. Chacune de ces congrégations était formée de Pères et de théologiens des quatre nations présentes au concile, à savoir, la nation italienne, la française, l'allemande et l'espagnole; chaque nation était représentée par un nombre égal de membres dans chacune de ces congrégations.

Dans la congrégation qui s'occupait des matières de foi, l'opinion contraire au privilége de Marie fut représentée par le P. Jean de Montenegro, général de l'ordre de Saint-Dominique, et par le cardinal de Turrecremata, religieux du même ordre. L'ouvrage de ce savant cardinal a été publié à Rome en 1447, par les soins du R. P. Spina. La pieuse croyance fut défendue par le P. Pierre Perqueri, de l'ordre des Frères Mineurs, et par Jean Gonzalez ou Contreras, chanoine de Tolède, député au concile comme théologien du roi de Castille, et appelé Jean de Ségovie, du nom de sa patrie.

Ce dernier a publié un ouvrage remarquable en faveur de l'Immaculée Conception. Son but était d'éclairer les Pères du con cile de Bâle, et de soutenir la cause de la Mère de Dieu dans la congrégation chargée de la discuter. Nous en devons la publication au R. P. Pierre de Alva et Astorga qui l'a imprimée à Louvain en 1666. C'est ce livre remarquable

qui nous indiquera les premières démarches faites par les pieux serviteurs de la Mère de Dieu pour obtenir de l'Église la définition dogmatique de l'Immaculée Conception, et les puissantes raisons qu'ils ont fait valoir dès le xv^e^ siècle, pour atteindre le but de leurs désirs (9).

Ce fut au concile de Bâle que l'on posa la question pour la première fois. (Quoiqu'on ait souvent discuté ce sujet, dit Jean de Ségovie, dans les écoles, dans les universités, dans les églises, dans les monastères, dans les tribunaux séculiers et ecclésiastiques et dans la cour romaine, cependant *il n'a jamais été,* que l'on sache, *proposé d'une manière authentique pour être défini, comme il a été introduit authentiquement et d'office dans le saint concile général de Bâte* (10).)

De ce concile datent les premières démarches faites pour obtenir la définition.

Dès que la question fut posée, on comprit qu'elle appartenait aux matières de foi; on pria donc la congrégation chargée de ces matières, de la discuter. Quelques partisans du privilége avaient sollicité le concile de déclarer leur croyance pieuse; mais les adversaires s'élevèrent aussitôt contre cette demande, en disant qu'on ne pouvait la déclarer pieuse avant qu'elle ne fût déclarée vraie; que si elle n'était point vraie, loin d'être pieuse, elle était manifestement hérétique. Ce raisonnement était sans réplique. La question fut donc placée sur le terrain de la foi.

Voici comment Jean de Ségovie la présenta au concile, afin qu'il la définît.

Il fit remarquer d'abord combien ses adversaires avaient tort de soutenir que leur opinion était un dogme de foi, parce qu'elle était contenue, d'après eux, dans l'Ecriture. Les

vérités de l'Ecriture, dit-il, ne deviennent certaines que de deux manières : par l'évidence et par le jugement de l'Eglise. Aussi longtemps qu'une vérité de l'Ecriture n'est pas constatée ainsi, personne n'a droit de soutenir qu'elle appartient à la nécessité de la foi. Or il est si peu vrai que l'opinion contraire au privilége de Marie soit un article de foi, qu'une multitude de docteurs et de fidèles la rejettent sans briser le lien de l'unité, sans tomber dans l'hérésie, sans encourir aucun blâme. Il n'est donc pas certain que cette opinion soit contenue dans l'Ecriture.

Il déclare ensuite que la pieuse croyance, malgré l'approbation générale, publique, solennelle de l'Eglise, qui équivaut à une déclaration indirecte de sa vérité, ne peut pas encore passer pour un dogme de foi, parce que cette conclusion que la Conception de la Mère de Dieu a été sans tache, repose sur des raisonnements dont plusieurs savants contestent de bonne foi la force et la justesse.

Il importe donc, dit-il, que le concile dissipe tous les doutes par un jugement doctrinal.

Deux mesures suffisent à cette fin. Que le concile approuve la fête et l'étende à l'Eglise universelle ; et puis qu'il déclare la pieuse croyance une vérité catholique, conforme à l'Ecriture, à la doctrine des Pères et à la saine raison.

Ce dernier point est essentiel, dit le docte théologien. Toutes les querelles relatives à la fête ont pris leur source dans la question de savoir si Marie a été conçue dans le péché ou en état de grâce (11). Les adversaires du privilége ont soutenu que leur opinion était un article de foi, et que la pieuse croyance n'est pas une vérité catholique. Le concile ne peut donc pas se borner à déclarer qui cette croyance

est pieuse, il doit déclarer qu'elle est contenue dans le dépôt de la foi.

Jean de Ségovie énumère ensuite les principales preuves de la pieuse croyance; après une longue suite de raisonnements solides et frappants, il établit un parallèle entre les deux opinions contraires, parallèle qui est tout entier à l'avantage de la pieuse croyance.

Dans ce parallèle il fait plusieurs observations très remarquables.

Nous sommes d'accord, dit-il à ses adversaires, sur ce point que la Mère de Dieu, en fait de péché, n'est point comparable au reste des mortels; et cependant vous êtes forcés d'avouer que Marie a été odieuse à Dieu avant de lui être agréable; qu'elle a été remplie de péché avant d'être remplie de grâces; qu'elle a été infectée par l'iniquité, avant d'être ornée de vertus; qu'elle a été laide aux yeux de Dieu, avant d'être belle; qu'elle a été esclave avant d'être souveraine, servante du diable avant d'être Reine des anges, fille du démon avant d'être fille de Dieu. En quoi diffère-t-elle donc, d'après vous, du reste des hommes?

Nous, au contraire, conformément au principe commun, nous disons que Marie a toujours été agréable à Dieu, toujours aimée, toujours pleine de grâces, de bonté, de sagesse, toujours belle, toujours bénie, toujours libre, toujours fille et amie de Dieu.

Voyez, dit-il encore, avec quel joyeux empressement notre croyance est accueillie partout, tandis que la vôtre est insupportable au peuple chrétien et n'attire que des désagréments à ceux qui la défendent. Notre croyance a pris une telle extension, qu'elle est vraiment universelle, qu'elle mérite le nom de vérité catholique (12).

Voulez-vous consulter l'Ecriture? Ici encore tout l'avantage est à nous. Le sens de l'Ecriture et l'enseignement constant de l'Eglise nous apprennent que la Mère de Dieu a toujours été sainte, parfaite, digne de son Fils (13). Nous entendous ces paroles dans un sens indéfini, simple, sans restriction. Vous, au contraire, vous exceptez de cette doctrine générale le premier instant de l'existence de Marie; exception que les termes de l'Ecriture n' autorisent pas, exception que, malgré tous vos efforts, vous n'êtes point parvenus à prouver d'une manière satisfaisante (14).

Ce raisonnement justifie parfaitement l'observation que nous avons faite ailleurs sur la grande valeur de la tradition générale de la sainteté indéfinie de la Mère de Dieu. Cette tradition était si claire, si manifeste, que les défenseurs du privilége n'etaient point obligés de prouver la vérité de l'Immaculée Conception, mais pouvaient forcer leurs adversaires à prouver que Marie a été conçue dans le péché. Par le raisonnement de Jean de Ségovie, on voit qu'au commencement du xv^{e} siècle la controverse avait déjà fait ce progrès.

Ne pouvant suivre le savant théologien espagnol dans tous les développements qu'il donne à sa thèse, je citerai, pour terminer, les deux raisonnements auxquels il réduit la démonstration des deux opinions, contraires; on y verra un résumé très-curieux des passages d l'Ecriture dont on se prévalait alors.

Voici, dit-il, comment nos adversaires raisonnent:

Tous les hommes qui croient en Jésus-Christ, qui ont été justifiés par lui, qui ont péché en Adam, en qui le délit du premier homme a passé, que l'Ecriture sainte enveloppe dans le péché, qui ont eu besoin de Jésus-Christ comme médecin, que Jésus-Christ est venu chercher et sauver, pour

qui il s'est livré comme rançon, et pour qui il est mort, tous ces hommes ont été conçus dans le péché originel; mais la sainte Vierge est dans ce cas: donc elle a été conçue dans le péché originel.

Ce raisonnement est vicieux sous bien des rapports. La majeure est fausse à plusieurs titres: Adam et Eve, qui ont été justifiés par Jésus Christ, n'ont pas été conçus dans le péché originel; ils n'ont pas péché en Adam; le péché n'a point passé en eux en venant d'autrui. Ce raisonnement suppose aussi que la sainte Vierge est une brebis égarée que Notre-Seigneur est venu chercher et sauver; que Jésus-Christ est mort pour elle comme étant pécheresse: chose qui n'a jamais été prouvée, et qui parait démentie par les éloges magnifiques que l'Eglise a toujours prodigués à la bienheureuse Vierge.

La pieuse croyance raisonne d'une manière bien plus concluante. Elle dit: Il est raisonnable de croire que la personne dont l'Ecriture atteste la sainteté, la beauté, l'excellence, le bonheur avant sa naissance, n'a jamais été pécheresse, mais qu'elle a toujours été l'amie et la bien-aimée de Dieu. Or l'Ecriture atteste tout cela de la sainte Vierge: celle-ci n'a donc jamais été pécheresse, mais elle a toujours été l'amie du Seigneur.

La majeure a été prouvée longuement. La mineure peut être résumée en ce peu de mots: l'Ecriture enseigne que cette Vierge bienheureuse écrasera la tête du démon; que son origine sera brillante comme une étoile; qu'elle naîtra droite comme une tige; que Dieu posera en elle son tabernacle comme dans un soleil; qu'elle se tiendra debout comme une reine à la droite de Dieu; que le Roi du ciel admirera sa beauté; que le Très-Haut l'a sanctifiée comme

son tabernacle, l'aidant dès le matin; que choses glorieuses ont été dites d'elle comme étant la cité de Dieu, cette cité dont Dieu même a jeté les fondements; que la sainteté convient à cette demeure; que cette Vierge a été la possession de Dieu dès le commencement de ses voies; qu'elle a été réglée avant toutes les créatures et conçue avant les abîmes; qu'elle a été joyeuse devant Dieu, jouant devant lui en tout temps, et qu'elle a trouvé son bonheur dans lui, tous les jours; que tous les jours de sa vie Dieu lui a rendu le bien et point le mal; que la sagesse de Dieu a bâti cette maison; que les fils et les filles (de Dieu) ont loué cette Vierge et l'ont proclamée bienheureuse; que rien de souillé n'entrera en elle; qu'elle sera belle comme l'olivier dans les champs; comme le cinnamome et le baume plein d'aromates, répandant, comme la myrrhe choisie, les odeurs les plus suaves; qu'en elle se trouvera toute grâce de la voie et de la vérité, et toute espérance de la vie et de la vertu; qu'elle figurera entre les filles d'Adam comme un lis entre les épines; qu'elle sera l'épouse et l'amie de Dieu, belle, charmante, douce, brillante, aimée, choisie, parfaite, immaculée, très-belle, très-aimée. Enfin l'Ecriture dit d'elle, qu'elle est toute belle et qu'en elle il n'y a aucune tache, aucun défaut. Voilà ce que l'Ecriture nous apprend en particulier de la bienheureuse Vierge Marie, comme lui étant propre avant sa naissance. Il est donc bien évident que l'Ecriture sainte ne la comprend point dans la masse des pécheurs; qu'elle ne lui applique point ce qu'elle dit en général des autres hommes; d'où il est facile de voir ce qu'il faut penser en particulier de sa Conception personnelle.

Il est évident que toutes ces assertions répuguent à

l'opinion contraire au privilége, qu'on ne peut les concilier avec elle.

Le Nouveau Testament n'est pas moins explicite. Il y est écrit que Marie est pleine de grâce; que le Seigneur est avec elle, qu'elle est bénie entre toutes les femmes; que toutes les générations la proclameront bienheureuse, que le Seigneur a fait en elle de grandes choses, que le Fils de Dieu l'a vénérée comme sa Mère; que Marie est cette femme vêtue du soleil, ayant la lune sous les pieds, et sur sa tête une couronne de douze étoiles. . . .

Par là on voit que le Nouveau Testament est conforme à l'Ancien, et qu'il ne parle que des qualités et de l'excellence qui conviennent à la Mère de Dieu."

Cette démonstration était concluante, décisive. Jean de Ségovie avait fait remarquer que l'Ecriture, les saints Pères, la pratique de l'Eglise, la croyance universelle, l'universalité de la fête, l'usage de décider les questions dogmatiques vivement controversées, militaient pour sa cause; qu'il avait apporté tour à tour les genres de preuves que la doctrine sainte fournit (15); que la pieuse croyance enfin avait tous les caractères d'une vérité catholique (16).

Il ne lui restait plus qu'à engager le concile à user de l'autorité dont il était revêtu, et à tirer les dernières conséquences des Actes qu'il avait déjà posés. "Le concile, dit-il, porte aujourd-hui la clef de la science et celle de l'autorité. Qu'il en fasse usage pour assurer l'œuvre de Dieu, manifeste dans la pieuse croyance; qu'il confirme la foi des fidèles, qui attend de lui cet appui; qu'il fournisse ce nouvel aliment à la piété (17). Tout est prêt pour ce jugement; et il y aurait de grands inconvénients à différer.

La cause été introduite d'une manière authentique pour

la première fois, au concile de Bâle, et elle a été discutée avec le plus grand soin. Douze délégués choisis pour promouvoir les affaires du concile, après une mûre délibération, ont conclu en faveur du privilége, dans une congrégation générale. D'autres délégués ont été chargés d'examiner comment le concile agirait à l'égard de cette conclusion. A ce propos beaucoup de discussions publiques ont eu lieu. Enfin une troisième série de délégués a examiné les arguments produits de part et d'autre; et l'on a résolu définitivement qu'il fallait décider la question. Le juge de la foi a fait un appel général, invitant tout le monde à produire ses arguments et ses raisons; il a même fixé un terme dans lequel on pouvait être entendu par les délégués. Voilà plus de deux ans que cette cause a été introduite; la troisième année est sur le point de s'écouler. Si le concile ne prononce pas la définition, tout le monde attribuera son silence à l'obscurité de la matière, aux doutes, aux hésitations des Pères du concile; ce qui tournera au détriment de la foi et de la paix. Des doutes sérieux naîtront aussitôt dans l'esprit des fidèles, et les adversaires du privilége manifesteront une nouvelle ardeur. Ils diront qu'il est permis de douter après le concile général, et la guerre recommencera avec plus d'animosité que jamais. La querelle ne s'agite plus entre les clercs et les religieux seulement, elle préoccupe les soldats, les paysans et les femmes; le peuple a appris à répondre aux adversaires du privilége de Marie. Il est des questions qui se sont assoupies par le temps; mais celle-ci paraît de nature à conserver des partisans et des adversaires jusqu'à ce que l'Eglise ait définitivement prononcé (18).

Maintenant que la pieuse croyance est enracinée dans tous les cœurs, que le concile n'hésite plus à la définir; il a

été assemblé pour décider les questions de foi et ramener la paix dans l'Eglise: en prononçant une décision définitive, il sera fidèle à sa mission; en gardant le silence, il met la foi en danger.

Ce jugment sera souverainement utile à l'Eglise; car non-seulement il procurera la paix au peuple chrétien, mais il vaudra aussi à cette sainte assemblée le puissant secours de la Mère de Dieu. Le concile a été assemblé par l'Esprit-Saint pour l'extirpation de l'hérésie, pour le rétablissement de la concorde et pour la réforme générale de l'Eglise. Il a déjà pris beaucoup de mesures importantes sans doute, pour atteindre cette triple fin; mais il ne l'atteindra point tout entière, s'il n'obtient le secours spécial de la très-glorieuse Vierge Marie. La Mère de Dieu récompense toujours les honneurs qu'on lui rend et l'affection qu'on lui témoigne. Quoique les défenseurs et les adversaires du privilége lui soient également dévoués, cependant les disputes qui les divisent l'affligent sans doute, et elle désire que la controverse vienne enfin à cesser.

Le seul moyen d'y mettre un terme est de prononcer un jugment définitif par lequel l'Eglise obligera tous les fidéles à croire le privilége de l'Immaculée Conception. Cette définition dogmatique fera cesser tous les scandales, et ramènera enfin la paix dans le âmes (19)."

Tel est l'éloquent plaidoyer que Jean de Ségovie présenta, en l'année 1436, aux Pères du concile de Bâle, afin qu'ils définissent l'Immaculée Conception de la sainte Vierge, comme *vérité catholique*. Les raisons que ce savant théologien fait valoir sont solides; sa démonstration est plus satisfaisante que celle d'un grand nombre d'autres qui ont traité ce sujet après lui. Sa conviction est aussi profonde que son

savoir : il n'hésite point à dire que la question est mûre pour la définition, et que les conditions ordinairement exigées par l'Eglise pour prononcer un décret dogmatique, sont toutes réalisées. Ce livre a dû faire et a fait une grande impression sur le concile : il l'a probablement déterminé à porter son célèbre décret ; car ce décret est calqué sur le livre du théologien espagnol. Comme Jean de Ségovie l'avait sollicité, la fête de l'Immaculée Conception de la sainte Vierge fut enrichie d'indulgences et étendue à tout l'univers chrétien, et la croyance à ce mystère fut déclarée *une vérité catholique,* conforme à l'Ecriture, à la doctrine des Pères, à la pratique de l'Eglise, et à la saine raison. Le concile défendit de la nier, ou de la contester, sous les peines les plus graves.

Si le concile avait été légitime en 1439, lorsqu'il porta ce décret, et si le Saint-Siége avait approuvé cet acte, l'Immaculée Conception eût été définie, il y a plus de quatre siècles. Mais, nous l'avons déjà fait remarquer, et tout le monde le sait, le concile de Bâle, à cette époque, s'était engagé dans les voies du schisme, et les décrets qu'il promulgua alors n'eurent jamais la force de lois universelles dans l'Eglise.

Aussi de nouvelles démarches furent-elles faites de la part des pays catholiques auprès du Saint-Siége, afin qu'il définît la pieuse croyance. Ce furent sans doute ces démarches qui engagèrent Sixte IV à approuver un Office propre de l'Immaculée Conception, et à accorder aux fidèles qui assistaient aux offices de la fête, les mêmes indulgences qu'Urbain IV avait accordées aux fidèles qui célébraient la fête du saint Sacrement (20).

Ces mesures importantes équivalaient à une définition indi-

recte; c'était évidemment un grand pas vers la définition explicite.

Dans le courant du XVe siècle, on ne voit point que d'autres tentatives aient été faites par les pieux serviteurs de Marie pour obtenir la définition de l'Immaculée Conception.

N. B.—Numbers refer to notes in Bourassé, vol. III, col. 494-502.

POPE SIXTUS IV

PAPAL DOCUMENTS

SIXTUS IV.

Sixtus IV was one of the strongest defenders of the Immaculate Conception on the Throne of St. Peter. Already as a cardinal he took up her cause by writing a book on the Immaculate Conception ("Ante pontificatum librum de immaculatae Virginis Conceptione scripsit," Bourassé, vol. X, pars IV, col. 700).

He added to the Angelic Salutation those words by which he no doubt meant to give the exegesis of the Angel's greeting: "Et benedicta sit Anna Mater tua, de qua sine macula tua processit caro virginea, idque pie fundentibus apostolica præmia impertivit." As Pope he issued two constitutions in honor or rather in defence of the Immaculate Conception, the first one in the sixth year of his pontificate, the second one in the thirteenth.

We give them in full as they are reproduced in Bourassé's Summa Aurea, vol. X, pars. IV, sectio V, col. 697 to 700:

SIXTI PAPAE IV, DE CONCEPTIONE B. VIRG. CONSTITUTIO (1476)

"Cum præexcelsa meritorum insignia, quibus Regina cœlorum Virgo Dei Genitrix gloriosa, sedibus prælata æthereis, sideribus quasi stella matutina prærutilans, devotæ considerationis indagine perscrutamur, et intra pectoris arcana revolvimus, quod ipsa, utpote via misericordiæ, et Mater gratiæ, et pietatis amica, humani generis consolatrix, pro salute fidelium qui delictorum onere gravantur, sedula oratrix, et pervigil ad Regem quem genuit, intercedit: dignum, quin potius debitum reputamus, universos Christifideles, ut omnipotenti Deo (cujus providentia ejusdem Virginis humilitatem ab æterno respiciens, pro reconcilianda suo Auctori humana natura, lapsu primi hominis æternæ morti obnoxia, eam sui Unigeniti habitaculum, sancti Spiritus præparatione constituit, ex qua carnem nostræ mortalitatis pro redemptione populi sui assumeret, et immaculata Virgo nihilominus post partum remaneret) de ipsius immaculatæ Virginis mira Conceptione gratias, et laudes referant, et instituta propterea in Dei Ecclesia, Missas, et alia divina Officia dicant, et illis intersint, indulgentiis, et peccatorum remissionibus invitare, ut exinde fiant Virginis meritis et intercessione divinæ gratiæ aptiores. Hac igitur consideratione inducti, omnipotentis Dei, ac beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum ejus auctoritate confisi; auctoritate apostolica, hac in perpetuum valitura Constitutione, statuimus et ordinamus, quod omnes et singuli Christifideles utriusque sexus, qui Missam et Officium Conceptionis ejusdem Virginis gloriosæ juxta piam, devotam et laudabilem ordinationem dilecti filii Magistri Leonardi de Nogarolis, clerici Veronensis, notarii nostri, et quæ desuper a nobis emanavit Missæ, et Officii hujusmodi institutionem in

die festivitatis Conceptionis ejusdem Virginis Mariæ et per Octavas ejus devote celebraverint, et dixerint, aut illis Horis canonicis interfuerint, quoties id fecerint, eamdem prorsus indulgentiam, et peccatorum remissionem consequantur, quam juxta felicis recordationis Urbani IV in concilio Viennensi approbatas, ac Martini V, et aliorum Romanorum Pontificum prædecessorum nostrorum Constitutiones, consequuntur illi, qui Missam et Horas canonicas in festo Corporis et Sanguinis Domini nostri Jesu Christi, a primis Vesperis, et per illius Octavas juxta Romanæ Ecclesiæ Constitutionem celebrant, dicunt, aut Missæ Officio, et Horis hujusmodi intersunt, præsentibus perpetuis temporibus valituris. Datum Romæ apud S. Petrum, anno Incarnationis Dominicæ 1476, III Kal. Martii, Pont. nostri anno sexto."

SIXTI PAPAE IV CONSTITUTIO ALTERA (1483)

"Grave nimis gerimus molestum, cum sinistra nobis de quibusdam ecclesiasticis personis referuntur, sed in eorum qui ad evangelizandum verbum Dei sunt deputati excessibus prædicando commissis, eo gravius provocamur, quo illi periculosius remanent incorrepti, cum facile deleri nequeant, qui multorum cordibus sic publice prædicando diffusius et damnabilius imprimuntur errores. Sane cum sancta Romana Ecclesia de intemeratæ semperque Virginis Mariæ Conceptione, publice festum solemniter celebret, et speciale ac proprium super hoc Officium ordinaverit: nonnulli (ut accepimus) diversorum Ordinum prædicatores in suis sermonibus ad populum, publice per diversas civitates et terras, affirmavere hactenus non erubuerint, et quotidie prædicare non cessent, omnes illos qui tenent aut asserunt eamdem gloriosam et immaculatam Dei Genitricem absque originalis peccati macula fuisse conceptam, mortaliter peccare, vel esse hæreticos; ejusdemque Immaculatæ Conceptionis Officium celebrantes, audientesque sermones illorum, qui eam sine macula conceptam esse affirmant peccare graviter. Sed et præfatis prædicationibus non contenti, confectos super his suis assertionibus libros in publicum ediderunt, ex quorum assertionibus et prædicationibus non levia scandala in mentibus fidelium exorta sunt, et majora merito exoriri formidantur in dies. Nos igitur temerariis ausibus, ac perversis assertionibus, ac scandalosis, et quæ exinde in Dei Ecclesia exoriri possunt (quantum nobis ex alto conceditur), obviare volentes, motu proprio, non ad alicujus nobis super hoc oblatæ petitionis instantiam,

sed de nostra mera deliberatione et certa scientia hujusmodi assertiones prædicatorum eorumdem, et aliorum quorumlibet, qui affirmare præsumerent, eos qui crederent aut tenerent eamdem Dei Genitricem ab originalis peccati macula, sua Conceptione præservatam fuisse; propterea alicujus hæresis labe pollutos fore, vel mortaliter peccare, aut hujusmodi Officium Conceptionis celebrantes, seu hujusmodi sermones audientes, alicujus peccati reatum incurrere, utpote falsas et erroneas a veritate penitus alienas, editosque desuper libros prædictos id continentes, quo ad hoc, auctoritate apostolica, tenore præsentium reprobamus et damnamus. Ac motu, scientia et auctoritate prædictis, statuimus et ordinamus, quod prædicatores verbi Dei, et quicunque alii, cujuscunque status, gradus aut ordinis, ac conditionis fuerint, qui de cætero, ausu temerario, præsumpserint in eorum sermonibus ad populum, seu alias quomodo libet, affirmare, hujusmodi sic per nos improbatas et damnatas assertiones, veras esse, aut dictos libros pro veris, legere, tenere, vel habere, postquam de præsentibus scientiam habuerint, excommunicationis sententiam eo ipso incurrant, a qua ab alio, quam a Romano Pontifice (nisi in mortis articulo) nequeant absolutionis beneficium obtinere. Item motu, scientia, et auctoritate similibus, simili pœnæ ac censuræ subjicientes eos qui ausi fuerint asserere, contrariam opinionem tenentes, videlicet gloriosam Virginem Mariam cum originali peccato fuisse conceptam, hæresis crimen, vel peccatum incurrere mortale, cum nondum sit a Romana Ecclesia, et apostolica Sede decisum.

Non obstantibus Constitutionibus et ordinationibus contrariis apostolicis quibuscunque, quibus communiter vel divisim, a Sede apostolica indultum exsistat, quod interdici, suspendi, vel excommunicari non possint per litteras apostolicas,

non facientes plenam ac expressam, ac de verbo ad verbum de indulto hujusmodi mentionem. Et ne de præmissis aliquando valeant ignorantiam allegare, volumus quod locorum ordinarii requisiti, præsentes litteras in ecclesiis consistentibus in eorum civitatibus, et suarum diœcesum, et locis insignibus, dum major ibi multitudo populi ad divina convenerit, sermonibus ad populum mandent, et faciant publicari. Præterea quia difficile foret præsentes litteras ad singula loca, in quibus expediens fuerit deferre: etiam volumus, et dicta auctoritate decernimus, quod earumdem litterarum transumpto, manu publici notarii confecto, et authentico, alicujus prælati Ecclesiastici sigillo munito, ubique stetur, prout staretur eisdem originalibus litteris, si forent exhibitæ, vel ostensæ. Nulli ergo omnino hominum liceat hanc paginam nostræ reprobationis, damnationis statuti, ordinationis, voluntatis et decreti infringere, vel ei ausu temerario contraire. Si quis autem hoc attentare præsumpserit, indignationem omnipotentis Dei, et beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum se noverit incursurum. Datum Romæ apud Sanctum Petrum, anno Incarnationis Dominicæ 1483, pridie Non. Septembr., pontificatus nostri anno 13."

Sixtus IV strengthened the Cult of the Immaculate Conception by several decrees. He ordered a solemn Octava of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, so that the feasts of the Saints *infra Octavam* should only be celebrated *post Octavam,* and "ut si festum Conceptionis in Dominica venerit, Dominica transferatur." (Bourassé.) "Jussit etiam, ut festum Conceptionis, quod Ecclesia *Romana* celebrat, in *tota* Ecclesia solemniter celebraretur in laudem B. Virginis. Romæ in ecclesia Sancti Petri in Vaticano capellam ædificavit, ut in ea Conceptio immaculatæ Virginis celebraretur." (Bourassé.)

But more than anything else counts his prayer in honor of the Immaculate Conception, which he not only composed, but for the pious recitation of which he granted a great indulgence. The prayer, which for its beauty, faith and fervor should be contained in our modern prayer-books, is to be found in Horis antiquis Parisiensibus, and we are glad that Bourassé in his Summa Aurea presents us with this pure gold:

Ave, Sanctissima Maria, Mater Dei, Regina cœli, Porta paradisi, Domina mundi, tu es singularis Virgo purissima; tu concepta sine peccato originali, et ideo immaculatissima; tu sine macula concepisti Jesum Salvatorem; tu fuisti verissime ante partum, in partu, et post partum inviolata et illibata; fac me tuis sanctis precibus pure, pie et sancte vivere, et ora pro nobis Jesum Filium tuum dilectum, et post mortem me suscipe, ab omnibus malis mentis et corporis libera me, et alios fac me liberare, opera misericordiæ acquirere, et in gloria paradisi in æternum tecum gaudere. Amen.

ST. PIUS V (1566-1572) AND THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

St. Pius V is praised in Bourassé, Vol. X, Col. 727, as follows:

Certe Pius in hoc se exhibuit specialem Immaculatæ Conceptionis beatissimæ Virginis cultorem, quod cum multa in Romano Breviario reformaverit, et aliquas festorum celebrationes abstulerit, festum tamen Conceptionis per universam Ecclesiam celebrari præceperit, Missalique, Breviario et Kalendario Romanis a se publicatis, et observari præceptis inseruerit, solemnitatemque istam sacram, et Conceptionem beatæ Mariæ Virginis dignissimam in ecclesiastico Officio ab omnibus acclamari voluerit, ita ut virtute præcepti piissimi Pii V, necesse habeant universi fideles Romanum Officium persolventes sub Conceptionis dignissimæ nomine, et professione illud celebrare. Sancto certe Pontifici pia hæc debet opinio. Sed, et fratres Minores non parum se ei debere profitentur, quibus proprium et antiquum Conceptionis recitare Officium libenter indulsit.

THE COUNCIL OF TRENT

Decree concerning Original Sin, June 17, 1546.

". . . This same holy synod doth nevertheless declare that it is not its intention to include in this decree, where original sin is treated of, the blessed and immaculate Virgin Mary, the Mother of God; but that the constitutions of Pope Sixtus IV, of happy memory, are to be observed under the pains contained in the said constitutions, which it renews." (Session V.)

"If anyone saith that a man . . . is able, during his whole life, to avoid all sins, even those that are venial, except by a special privilege from God, as the Church holds in regard of the Blessed Virgin; let him be anathema." (Sess. VI, can. 23.)

ALEXANDER VII

Innovatio Constitutionum et decretorum in favorem sententiæ asserentis, animam beatæ Mariæ Virginis in sui creatione et in corpus infusione a peccato originali præservatam fuisse, editorum.

(A. D. 1661.)*

Alexander Papa VII, ad perpetuam rei memoriam.

Sollicitudo omnium Ecclesiarum quam licet meritis et viribus longe impares, Dei optimi maximi voluntate et providentia gerimus, in id nos anxie tenet intentos et viligantes, ut scandala quæ inter fideles pro humanæ naturæ corruptione et fragilitate necesse est ut veniant, quantum fieri potest, paucissima exoriantur, utque exorta quam celerrime et quam diligentissime amoveantur; nam iis per quos veniunt certam peccati perniciem, quibus vero præbentur, præsens afferunt labendi periculum, quorum nos pro nostro pastoralis officii debito et damnum summopere dolemus, et discrimine assidue utimur.

§ 1. Sane vetus est Christi fidelium erga ejus beatissimam Matrem Virginem Mariam pietas, sentientium, ejus animam in primo instanti creationis atque infusionis in corpus fuisse speciali Dei gratia et privilegio, intuitu meritorum Jesu Christi ejus Filii, humani generis Redemptoris, a macula peccati originalis præservatam immunem, atque in hoc sensu

* Bourassé, Vol. VII, col. 251-255.

ejus Conceptionis festivitatem solemni ritu colentium et celebrantium: crevitque horum numerus, atque hujusmodi cultus post editas a felic. record. Sixto Papa IV, prædecessore nostro, in ejus commendationem apostolicas Constitutiones, quas sacrum concilium Tridentinum innovavit, atque observari mandavit. Aucta rursus, et propagata fuit pietas hæc, et cultus erga Deiparam post erecta hoc nomine, approbantibus Romanis Pontificibus, monasteria religiosorum ordinum et confraternitates, ac concessas ab iisdem indulgentias, ita ut accedentibus quoque plerisque celebrioribus academiis ad hanc sententiam, jam fere omnes Catholici eam complectantur.

§ 2. Et quia ex occasione contrariæ assertionis in concionibus, lectionibus, conclusionibus et actibus publicis quod nempe eadem beatissima Virgo Maria fuerit concepta cum peccato originali, oriebantur in populo Christiano cum magna Dei offensa scandala, jurgia et dissensiones, recol. memor. Paulus Papa V, etiam prædecessor noster, vetuit horum opinionem præfatæ sententiæ contrariam publice doceri aut prædicari: quam prohibitionem piæ memor. Gregorius Papa XV, similiter prædecessor noster, ad privata etiam colloquia extendit; mandans insuper in favorem ejusdem sententiæ, ut in sacrosancto Missæ sacrificio ac divino Officio celebrandis, tam publice quam privatim, non alio quam Conceptionis nomine uti quicunque debeant.

§ 3. Nihilominus, prout venerabiles fratres episcopi fere omnes Hispaniarum cum ecclesiarum suarum capitulis datis ad nos litteris exposuerunt, accedente etiam insinuatione charissimi in Christo filii nostri Philippi earumdem Hispaniarum regis Catholici, qui specialem super hoc misit ad nos oratorem venerabilem fratrem Ludovicum episcopum Pla-

centinum, per quem etiam delatæ fuerunt ad nos supplicationes regnorum earumdem Hispaniarum, pergunt aliqui contrariæ illius opinionis assertores contra præfatas prohibitiones tum privatim tum publice præfatam sententiam aut impugnare aut vellicare, et favorem a Romanis Pontificibus cultui et festo secundum illam præstitum ita interpretari, ut frustrentur; imo Ecclesiam Romanam huic sententiæ, et cultui juxta illam beatæ Virgini exhibito favere negant, pios Christi fideles a sua pacifica quasi possessione deturbare conando, unde offensiones, scandala et jurgia, quibus obviare voluerunt Paulus V et Gregorius XV nostri prædecessores perdurant adhuc, et ex occasione eorumdem adversantium majora his incommoda in posterum prudenter et merito timentur. Quapropter super his tam præfati episcopi cum ecclesiarum suarum capitulis, quam memoratus Philippus rex, ejusque regna nobis pro opportuno remedio instanter supplicari fecerunt.

§ 4. Nos considerantes, quod sancta Romana Ecclesia de intemeratæ semper Virginis Mariæ Conceptione festum solemniter celebrat, et speciale ac proprium super hoc Officium olim ordinavit juxta piam, devotam et laudabilem institutionem quæ a Sixto IV prædecessore nostro tunc emanavit; volentesque laudabili huic pietati et devotioni, et festo ac cultui secundum illam exhibito in Ecclesia Romana post ipsius cultus institutionem nunquam immutato Romanorum Pontificum prædecessorum nostrorum exemplo favere, necnon tueri pietatem et devotionem hanc colendi et celebrandi beatissimam Virginem, præveniente scilicet Spiritus sancti gratia a peccato originali præservatam; cupientesque in Christi grege unitatem spiritus in vinculo pacis, sedatis offensionibus et jurgiis, amotisque scandalis conservare: ad præ-

fatorum episcoporum cum ecclesiarum suarum capitulis ac Philippi regis, ejusque regnorum oblatam nobis instantiam ac preces, Constitutiones et decreta a Romanis Pontificibus prædecessoribus nostris, et præcipue a Sixto IV, Paulo V et Gregorio XV edita in favorem sententiæ asserentis animam beatæ Mariæ Virginis in sui creatione et in corpus infusione Spiritus sancti gratia donatam, et a peccato originali præservatam fuisse, necnon et in favorem festi, et cultus Conceptioni ejusdem Virginis Deiparæ secundum piam istam sententiam, ut præfertur, exhibiti, innovamus, et sub censuris et pœnis in eisdem Constitutionibus contentis observari mandamus.

§ 5. Et insuper omnes et singulos, qui præfatas Constitutiones seu decreta ita pergent interpretari, ut favores per illas dictæ sententiæ, et festo seu cultui secundum illam exhibito frustrentur, vel qui hanc eamdem sententiam, festum, seu cultum in disputationem revocare, aut contra ea quoquo modo directe, vel indirecte, aut quovis prætextu etiam definibilitatis ejus examinandæ, sive sacram Scripturam, aut sanctos Patres, sive doctores glossandi, vel interpretandi, denique alios quovis prætextu, seu occasione, scripto, seu voce loqui, concionari, tractare, disputare, contra ea quidquam determinando aut asserendo, vel argumenta contra ea asserendo et insoluta relinquendo, aut alio quovis excogitabili modo disserendo, ausi fuerint, præter pœnas et censuras in Constitutionibus Sixti IV contentas, quibus illos subjacere volumus, et per præsentes subjicimus, etiam concionandi, publice legendi, seu docendi et interpretandi facultate, ac voce activa et passiva in quibuscunque electionibus eo ipso absque alia declaratione privatos esse volumus, necnon ad concionandum, publice legendum, docendum et inter-

pretandum perpetuæ inhabilitatis pœnas ipso facto incurrere absque alia declaratione; a quibus pœnis nonnisi a nobis ipsis, vel a successoribus nostris Romanis Pontificibus absolvi, aut super iis dispensari possint: necnon eosdem aliis pœnis nostro et eorumdem Romanorum Pontificum successorum nostrorum arbitrio infligendis pariter subjacere volumus, prout subjicimus per præsentes, innovantes Pauli V et Gregorii XV superius memoratas Constitutiones sive decreta.

§ 6. Ac libros in quibus præfata sententia, festum, seu cultus secundum illam in dubium revocatur, aut contra ea quomodocunque, ut supra, aliquid scribitur aut legitur, seu locutiones, conciones, tractatus et disputationes contra eadem continentur, post Pauli V supra laudatum decretum edita, aut in posterum quomodolibet edenda, prohibemus sub pœnis et censuris in indice librorum prohibitorum contentis, et ipso facto absque alia declaratione pro expresse prohibitis haberi volumus et mandamus. Vetamus autem Sixti IV Constitutionibus inhærentes, quempiam asserere, quod propter hoc contrariam opinionem tenentes, videlicet gloriosam Virginem Mariam cum originali peccato fuisse conceptam, hæresis crimen, aut mortale peccatum incurrant; cum a Romana Ecclesia et ab apostolica Sede nondum fuerit hoc decisum, prout nos nunc minime decidere volumus, aut intendimus: quin potius contrariam illam opinionem hæresis, aut peccati mortalis, aut impietatis damnare audentes, præter pœnas, quibus eos subjicit Sixtus IV aliique prædecessores nostri Romani Pontifices, gravioribus aliis pœnis subjicimus, quas in contrafacientes huic nostræ Constitutioni superius inflximus.

§ 7. Volentes quod contra hujus nostræ Constitutionis transgressores, etiam regulares cujusvis ordinis et instituti,

etiam societatis Jesu, et quomodolibet exemptos, et alias quascunque ecclesiasticas et sæculares personas cujuscunque status, gradus, ordinis, aut dignitatis, tam ecclesiasticæ quam sæcularis, ut præfertur, tam episcopi et prælati superiores, aliique locorum ordinarii, quam hæreticæ pravitatis ubique locorum deputati inquisitores procedant, et inquirant, atque in eos stricte animadvertant. Nos enim iis, et eorum cuilibet contra eosdem transgressores procedendi et inquirendi ac pœnis coercendi et puniendi liberam facultatem et auctoritatem iisdem auctoritate et tenore tribuimus et impartimur, eosque, ut præfertur, procedere inquirere et punire districte præcipimus et mandamus.

§ 8. Non obstantibus Constitutionibus et ordinationibus ac quibusvis indultis, litteris apostolicis quibusvis personis quantumcunque qualificatis, et in quacunque, etiam cardinalatus, patriarchali, archiepiscopali, episcopali et quavis alia dignitate et honore constitutis, etiam quod contra eos procedi, interdici, suspendi, vel excommunicari nequeant, quomodolibet concessis. Quibus omnibus, et eorum singulis, pro sufficienti illorum derogatione de eis, ipsorumque totis tenoribus specialis, specifica, individua, expressa, ac de verbo ad verbum, non autem per generales, etiam idem importantes clausulas mentio habenda, aut alia exquisita forma observanda foret, tenores hujusmodi ac si de verbo ad verbum inserti forent, præsentibus pro sufficienter expressis, et insertis habentes, harum serie specialiter et expresse deroganus, cæterisque contrariis quibuscunque.

§ 9. Ut autem hæc nostra Constitutio, et præmissa omnia ad eorum omnium quorum interest notitiam congruentius pervenire possint, in virtute sanctæ obedientiæ, et sub pœna privationis ab ingressu ecclesiæ eo ipso incurrenda præcipi-

mus et mandamus omnibus et singulis locorum ordinariis ac eorum vicariis, suffraganeis et officialibus quibuscunque, et aliis singulis ad quos quomodolibet spectat et pertinet, quatenus hujusmodi nostram Constitutionem singulis suæ diœcesis, vel districtus prædicatoribus, et aliis quibus expedire judicaverint, opportune insinuent et publicent, ac insinuari et publicari faciant, ne quis in posterum quoquo modo ignorantiam de præmissis possit prætendere, aut se contra præmissa valeat excusare.

§ 10. Volumus, et similiter eadem auctoritate decernimus et mandamus, quod præsentes litteræ per aliquos ex nostris cursoribus in basilicarum Sancti Joannis Lateranensis, ac Principis apostolorum, et cancellariæ apostolicæ valvis, ac in acie Campi Floræ de Urbe de more publicentur et affigantur; quæ affixio et publicatio ita omnes et singulos ad quos spectat, afficiat et arctet, ac si illis personaliter intimatæ fuissent; et quod illarum transumptis, etiam impressis, manu alicujus notarii subscriptis, et sigillo alicujus personæ in dignitate ecclesiastica constitutæ munitis eadem prorsus fides adhibeatur, quæ præsentibus litteris, adhiberetur, si ostensæ vel exhibitæ forent.

Datum Romæ, apud Sanctam Mariam Majorem, sub annulo Piscatoris, die 8 Decemb. 1661, pontificatus nostri anno septimo.

De Celebrando Quinquagesimo Anniversario ab Adserto intaminato Deiparae Conceptu.

Venerabilibus Fratribus, Patriarchis, Primatibus, Archiepiscopis, Episcopis aliisque locorum ordinariis pacem et communionem cum Apostolica sede habentibus.

PIUS PP. X.

VENERABILES FRATRES,

Salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem.

Ad diem illum laetissimum, brevi mensium intervallo, aetas nos referet, quo, ante decem quinquennia, Pius IX decessor Noster, sanctissimae memoriae pontifex, amplissima septus purpuratorum patrum atque antistitum sacrorum corona, magisterii inerrantis auctoritate, edixit ac promulgavit esse a Deo revelatum beatissimam virginem Mariam, in primo instanti suae Conceptionis, ab omni originalis culpae labe fuisse immunem. Promulgationem illam quo animo per omnium terrarum orbem fideles, quibus iucunditatis publicae et gratulationis argumentis exceperint nemo est qui ignoret; ut plane, post hominum memoriam, nulla voluntatis significatio data sit tum in augustam Dei Matrem tum in Jesu Christi Vicarium, quae vel pateret latius, vel communiori concordia exhiberetur.—Iam quid spe bona nos

prohibet, Venerabiles Fratres, dimidio quamvis saeculo interiecto, fore ut, renovata immaculatae Virginis recordatione, laetitiae illius sanctae veluti imago vocis in animis nostris resultet, et fidei atque amoris in Dei Matrem augustam praeclara longinqui temporis spectacula iterentur? Equidem ut hoc aveamus ardenter pietas facit, quam Nos in Virginem beatissimam, summa cum beneficentiae eius gratia, per omne tempus fovimus: ut vero futurum certo expectemus facit catholicorum omnium studium, promptum illud semper ac paratissimum ad amoris atque honoris testimonia iterum iterumque magnae Dei Matri adhibenda. Attamen id etiam non diffitebimur, desiderium hoc Nostrum inde vel maxime commoveri quod, arcano quodam instinctu, praecipere posse Nobis videmur, expectationes illas magnas brevi esse explendas, in quas et Pius decessor et universi sacrorum antistites, ex asserto solemniter immaculato Deiparae Conceptu, non sane temere, fuerunt adducti.

Quas enimvero ad hunc diem non evasisse, haud pauci sunt qui querantur, ac Ieremiae verba subinde usurpent: *Expectavimus pacem, et non erat bonum: tempus medelae et ecce formido.*[1] Ast quis eiusmodi *modicae fidei* non reprehendat, qui Dei opera vel introspicere vel expendere ex veritate negligunt? Ecquis enim occulta gratiarum munera numerando percenseat, quae Deus Ecclesiae, conciliatrice Virgine, hoc toto tempore impertiit? Quae si praeterire quis malit, quid de vaticana synodo existimandum tanta temporis opportunitate habita; quid de inerranti pontificum magisterio tam apte ad mox erupturos errores adserto; quid demum de novo et inaudito pietatis aestu, quo ad Christi Vicarium, colendum coram, fideles ex omni genere omnique parte iam

[1] Ier. viii, 15.

diu confluunt? An non miranda Numinis providentia in uno alteroque Decessore Nostro, Pio videlicet ac Leone, qui, turbulentissima tempestate, eâ, quae nulli contigit, pontificatus usurâ, Ecclesiam sanctissime administrarunt? Ad haec, vix fere Pius Mariam ab origine labis nesciam fide catholica credendam indixerat, quum in oppido Lourdes mira ap ipsa Virgina ostenta fieri coepta: exinde molitione ingenti et opere magnifico Deiparae Immaculatae excitatae aedes; ad quas, quae quotidie, divina exorante Matre, patrantur prodigia, illustria sunt argumenta ad praesentium hominum incredibilitatem profligandam.—Tot igitur tantorumque beneficiorum testes, quae, Virgine benigne implorante, contulit Deus quinquagenis annis mox elabendis; quidni speremus *propiorem esse salutem nostram quam cum credidimus?* eo vel magis, quod divinae Providentiae hoc esse experiendo novimus ut extrema malorum a liberatione non admodum dissocientur. *Prope est ut veniat tempus eius, et dies eius non elongabuntur. Miserebitur enim Dominus Iacob, et eliget de Israël*[2]; ut plane spes sit nos etiam brevi tempore inclamaturos: *Contrivit Dominùs baculum impiorum. Conquievit et siluit omnis terra, gavisa est et exultavit.*[3]

Anniversarius tamen dies, quinquagesimus ab adserto intaminato Deiparae conceptu, cur singularem in christiano populo ardorem animi excitare debeat, ratio Nobis extat potissimum, Venerabiles Fratres, in eo, quod superioribus Litteris encyclicis proposuimus, *instaurare* videlicet *omnia in Christo.* Nam cui exploratum non sit nullum, praeterquam per Mariam, esse certius et expeditius iter ad universos cum Christo iungendos, perque illum perfectam filiorum adop-

[2] Isai. xiv, 1.
[3] Isai. xiv, 5.

tionem assequendam ut simus sancti et immaculati in conspectu Dei? Profecto, si vere Mariae dictum: *beata, quae credidisti, quoniam perficientur ea, quae dicta sunt tibi a Domino,*[4] ut nempe Dei Filium conciperet pareretque; si idcirco illum excepit utero, qui Veritas naturâ est, ut *novo ordine, nova nativitate generatus . . . invisibilis in suis, visibilis* fieret *in nostris:*[5] quum Dei Filius, factus homo, *auctor sit et consummator fidei nostrae;* opus est omnino sanctissimam eius Matrem mysteriorum divinorum participem ac veluti custodem agnoscere, in qua, tamquam in fundamento post Christum nobilissimo, fidei saeculorum omnium extruitur aedificatio.

Quid enim? an non potuisset Deus restitutorem humani generis ac fidei conditorem aliâ, quam per Virginem, viâ impertiri nobis? Quia tamen aeterni providentiae Numinis visum est ut Deum-Hominem per Mariam haberemus, quae illum, Spiritu Sancto, foecunda, suo gestavit utero; nobis nil plane superest, nisi quod de Mariae manibus Christum recipiamus. Hinc porro in Scripturis sanctis, quotiescumque *de futura in nobis gratia prophetatur;* toties fere Servator hominum cum sanctissima eius Matre coniungitur. Emittetur agnus dominator terrae, sed de petra deserti: flos ascendet, attamen de radice Iesse, Mariam utique, serpentis caput conterentem, prospiciebat Adam, obortasque maledicto lacrymas tenuit. Eam cogitavit Noë, arca sospita inclusus; Abraham nati nece prohibitus; Iacob scalam videns perque illam ascendentes et descendentes angelos; Moses miratus rubum, qui ardebat et non comburebatur; David exsiliens et psallens dum adduceret arcam Dei; Elias nubeculam intuitus

[4] Luc. i, 45.
[5] S. Leo M. Sermo 2 de Nat. Dom.

ascendentem de mari. Quid multa? Finem legis, imaginum atque oraculorum veritatem in Maria denique post Christum reperimus.

Per Virginem autem, atque adeo per illam maxime, aditum fieri nobis ad Christi notitiam adipiscendam, nemo profecto dubitabit qui etiam reputet, unam eam fuisse ex omnibus, quacum Iesus, ut filium cum matre decet, domestico triginta annorum usu intimaque consuetudine coniunctus fuit. Ortus miranda mysteria, nec non Christi pueritiae, atque illud in primis assumptionis humanae naturae, quod fidei initium ac fundamentum est, cuinam latius patuere quam Matri? Quae quidem non ea modo *conservabat conferens in corde suo* quae Bethlehem acta quaeve Hierosolymis in templo Domini, sed Christi consiliorum particeps occultarumque voluntatum, vitam ipsam Filii vixisse dicenda est. Nemo itaque penitus ut illa Christum novit; nemo illâ, aptior dux et magister ad Christum noscendum.

Hinc porro, quod iam innuimus, nullus etiam hac Virgine efficacior ad homines cum Christo iungendos. Si enim, ex Christi sententia, *haec est autem vita aeterna: Ut cognoscant te, solum Deum verum, et quem misisti Iesum Christum;* [6] per Mariam vitalem Christi notitiam adipiscentes, per Mariam pariter vitam illam facilius assequimur, cuius fons et initium Christus.

Quot vero quantisque de caussis Mater sanctissima haec nobis praeclara munera largiri studeat, si paullisper spectemus; quanta profecto ad spem nostram accessio fiet!

An non Christi mater Maria? nostra igitur et mater est.— Nam statuere hoc sibi quisque debet, Iesum, qui Verbum est caro factum, humani etiam generis servatorem esse. Iam,

[6] Ioan. xvii, 3.

qua Deus-Homo, concretum Ille, ut ceteri homines, corpus nactus est: qua vero nostri generis restitutor, *spiritale* quoddam corpus atque, ut aiunt, *mysticum*, quod societas eorum est, qui Christo credunt. *Multi unum corpus sumus in Christo.*[7] Atqui aeternum Dei Filium non ideo tantum concepit Virgo ut fieret homo, humanam ex ea assumens naturam; verum etiam ut, per naturam ex ea assumptam, mortalium fieret sospitator. Quamobrem Angelus pastoribus dixit: *Natus est vobis hodie Salvator, qui est Christus Dominus.*[8] In uno igitur eodemque alvo castissimae Matris et carnem Christus sibi assumpsit et *spiritale* simul corpus adiunxit, ex iis nempe coagmentatum *qui crediturі erant in eum.* Ita ut Salvatorem habens Maria in utero, illos etiam dici queat gessisse omnes, quorum vitam continebat vita Salvatoris. Universi ergo, quotquot cum Christo iungimur quique, ut ait Apostolus, *membra sumus corporis eius de carne ejus et de ossibus eius,*[9] de Mariae utero egressi sumus, tamquam corporis instar cohaerentis cum capite. Unde, spiritali quidem ratione ac mystica, et Mariae filii nos dicimur, et ipsa nostrum omnium mater est. *Mater quidem spiritu . . . sed plane mater membrorum Christi, quod nos sumus.*[10] Si igitur Virgo beatissima Dei simul atque hominum parens est, ecquis dubitet eam omni ope adniti ut Christus, *caput corporis ecclesiae,*[11] in nos sua membra, quae eius sunt munera infundat, idque cumprimis ut eum noscamus et *ut vivamus per eum?*[12]

Ad haec, Deiparae sanctissimae non hoc tantum in laude

[7] Rom. xii, 5.
[8] Luc. ii, 11.
[9] Ephes. v, 30.
[10] S. Aug., L. *de S. Virginitate*, c. 6.
[11] Coloss. i, 18.
[12] I. Ioann. iv, 9.

ponendum est quod *nascituro ex humanis membris Unigenito Deo carnis suae materiam* ministravit,[13] qua nimirum saluti hominum compararetur hostia; verum etiam officium eiusdem hostiae custodiendae nutriendaque, atque adeo, stato tempore, sistendae ad aram. Hinc Matris et Filii nunquam dissociata consuetudo vitae et laborum, ut aeque in utrumque caderent Prophetae verba: *Deficit in dolore vita mea, et anni mei in* gemitibus.[14] Quum vero extremum Filii tempus advenit, *stabat iuxta crucem Iesu Mater eius*, non in immani tantum occupata spectaculo, sed plane gaudens quod *Unigenitus suus pro salute generis humani offerretur, et tantum etiam compassa est, ut, si fieri potuisset, omnia tormenta quae Filius pertulit, ipsa multo libentius sustineret.*[15]

Ex hac autem Mariam inter et Christum communione dolorum ac voluntatis, *promeruit* illa *ut reparatrix perditi orbis dignissime fieret*,[16] atque ideo universorum munerum dispensatrix quae nobis Iesus nece et sanguine comparavit.

Equidem non diffitemur horum erogationem munerum privato proprioque iure esse Christi; siquidem et illa eius unius morte nobis sunt parta, et Ipse pro potestate mediator Dei atque hominum est. Attamen, pro ea, quam diximus, dolorum atque aerumnarum Matris cum filio communione, hoc Virgini augustae datum est, ut sit *totius terrarum orbis potentissima apud unigenitum Filium suum mediatrix et conciliatrix.*[17] Fons igitur Christus est, et *de plenitudine eius nos omnes accepimus;*[18] *ex quo totum corpus compactum, et connexum per omnem iuncturam subministrationis . . .*

[13] S. Bed. Ven., L. iv, in Luc. xi.
[14] Ps. xxx, II.
[15] S. Bonav. I. Sent. d. 48, ad Litt. dub. 4.
[16] Eadmeri Mon. *De Excellentia Virg. Mariae*, c. 9.
[17] Pius IX in Bull. *Ineffabilis*,
[18] Ioann i, 16.

augmentum corporis facit in aedificationem sui in caritate.[19] Maria vero, ut apte Bernardus notat, *aquaeductus* est;[20] aut etiam collum, per quod corpus cum capite iungitur itemque caput in corpus vim et virtutem exerit. *Nam ipsa est collum Capitis nostri, per quod omnia spiritualia dona corpori eius mystico communicantur.*[21] Patet itaque abesse profecto plurimum ut nos Deiparae supernaturalis gratiae efficiendae vim tribuamus, quae Dei unius est. Ea tamen, quoniam universis sanctitate praestat coniunctioneque cum Christo, atque a Christo ascita in humanae salutis opus, *de congruo,* ut aiunt, promeret nobis quae Christus *de condigno* promeruit, estque princeps largiendarum gratiarum ministra. *Sedet* ille *ad dexteram maiestatis in excelsis;*[22] Maria vero adstat regina a dextris eius, *tutissimum cunctorum periclitantium perfugium et fidissima auxiliatrix, ut nihil sit timendum nihilque desperandum ipsa duce, ipsa auspice, ipsa propitia, ipsa protegente.*[23]

His positis, ut ad propositum redeamus, cui Nos non iure recteque affirmasse videbimur, Mariam, quae a Nazarethana domo ad *Calvariae locum* assiduam se Iesu comitem dedit, eiusque arcana cordis ut nemo alius novit, ac thesauros promeritorum eius materno veluti iure administrat, maximo certissimoque esse adiumento ad Christi notitiam atque amorem? Nimium scilicet haec comprobantur ex dolenda eorum ratione, qui, aut daemonis astu aut falsis opinionibus, adiutricem Virginem praeterire se posse autumant! Miseri atque infelices, praetexunt se Mariam negligere, honorem ut Chris-

[19] Ephes. iv, 16.
[20] Serm. de temp, in Nativ. B. V., *de Aquaeductu,* n. 4.
[21] S. Bernardin. Sen.; Quadrag. *de Evangelio aeterno,* Serm. x, a. 3, c. 3.
[22] Hebr. i, 3.
[23] Pius IX in Bull. *Ineffabilis.*

to habeant: ignorant tamen non *inveniri puerum nisi cum Maria matre eius.*

Quae cum ita sint, huc Nos, Venerabiles Fratres, spectare primum volumus, quae modo ubique apparantur sollemnia Mariae sanctae ab origine immaculatae. Nullus equidem honor Mariae optabilior, nullus iucundior quam ut noscamus rite et amemus Iesum. Sint igitur fidelium celebritates in templis, sint festi apparatus, sint laetitiae civitatum; quae res omnes non mediocres usus afferunt ad pietatem fovendam. Verumtamen nisi his voluntas animi accedat, formas habebimus, quae speciem tantum offerant relligionis. Has Virgo quum videat, iusta reprehensione Christi verbis in nos utetur: *Populus hic labiis me honorat: cor autem eorum longe est a me.*[24]

Nam ea demum est germana adversus Deiparentem relligio, quae profluat animo; nihilque actio corporis habet aestimationis in hac re atque utilitatis, si sit ab actione animi seiugata. Quae quidem actio eo unice pertineat necesse est, ut divini Mariae Filii mandatis penitus obtemperemus. Nam si amor verus is tantum est, qui valeat ad voluntates iungendas; nostram plane atque Matris sanctissimae parem esse voluntatem oportet, scilicet Domino Christo servire. Quae enim Virgo prudentissima, ad Canae nuptias, ministris aiebat, eadem nobis loquitur: *Quodcumque dixerit vobis facite.*[25] Verbum vero Christi est: *Si autem vis ad vitam ingredi serva mandata.*[26] Quapropter hoc *quisque persuasum* habeat: si pietas, quam in Virginem beatissimam quis profitetur, non eum a peccando retinet, vel pravos emandandi

[24] Matth. xv, 8.
[25] Ioann. ii, 5.
[26] Matth. xix, 17.

mores consilium non indit; fucatam esse pietatem ac fallacem, utpote quae proprio nativoque careat fructu.

Quae si cui forte confirmatione egere videantur, hauriri, ea commode potest ex ipso *dogmate* immaculati conceptus Deiparae.—Nam, ut catholicam *traditionem* praetermittamus, quae, aeque ac Scripturae sacrae, fons veritatis est; unde persuasio illa de immaculata Mariae Virginis Conceptione visa est, quovis tempore, adeo cum christiano sensu congruere, ut fidelium animis insita atqua innata haberi posset? *Horremus,* sic rei causam egregie explicavit Dionysius Carthusianus, *horremus enim mulierem, quae caput serpentis erat contritura quandoque ab eo contritam atque diaboli filiam fuisse matrem Domini fateri.*[27] Nequibat scilicet in christianae plebis intelligentiam id cadere, quod Christi caro, sancta, impolluta atque innocens, in Virginis utero, de carne assumpta esset, cui vel vestigio temporis, labes fuisset illata. Cur ita vero, nisi quod peccatum et Deus per infinitam oppositionem separantur? Hinc sane catholicae ubique gentes persuasum habuere, Dei Filium, antequam, natura hominum assumpta, *lavaret nos a peccatis nostras in sanguine suo,* debuisse, in primo instanti suae conceptionis, singulari gratia ac privilegio, ab omni originalis culpae labe praeservare immunem Virginem Matrem. Quoniam igitur peccatum omne usque adeo horret Deus, ut futuram Filii sui Matrem non cuiusvis modo maculae voluerit expertem, quae voluntate suscipitur; sed, munere singularissimo, intuitu meritorum Christi, illius etiam, qua omnes Adae filii, mala veluti haereditate, notamur: ecquis ambigat, primum hoc cuique officium proponi, qui Mariam obsequio demereri aveat, ut vitiosas

[27] 3 Sent. d. 3, q. I.

corruptasque consuetudines emendet, et quibus in vetitum nititur, domitas habeat cupiditates?

Quod si praeterea quis velit, velle autem nullus non debet, ut sua in Virginem relligio iusta sit omnique ex parte absoluta; ulterius profecto opus est progredi, atque ad imitationem exempli eius omni ope contendere.—Divina lex est ut, qui aeternae beatitatis potiri cupiunt, formam patientiae et sanctitatis Christi, imitando, in se exprimant. *Nam quos praescivit, et praedestinavit conformes fieri imaginis Filii sui, ut sit ipse primogenitus in multis fratribus.*[28] At quoniam ea fere est infirmitas nostra, ut tanti exemplaris amplitudine facile deterreamur; providentis Dei numine, aliud nobis est exemplar propositum, quod, quum Christo sit proximum, quantum humanae licet naturae, tum aptius congruat cum exiguitate nostra. Eiusmodi autem nullum est praeter Deiparam. *Talis enim fuit Maria,* ait ad rem sanctus Ambrosius, *ut eius unius vita omnium sit disciplina.* Ex quo recte ab eodem conficitur: *Sit igitur vobis tamquam in imagine descripta virginitas, vita Mariae, de qua velut speculo, refulget species castitatis et forma virtutis.*[29]

Quamvis autem deceat filios Matris sanctissimae nullam praeterire laudem quin imitentur; illas tamen Eiusdem virtutes ipsos fideles assequi prae ceteris desideramus, quae principes sunt ac veluti nervi atque artus christianae sapientiae: fidem inquimus, spem et caritatem in Deum atque homines. Quarum quidem virtutum fulgore etsi nulla, in Virgine, vitae pars caruit; maxime tamen eo tempore enituit, quum nato emorienti adstitit.—Agitur in crucem Iesus(eique in maledictis obiicitur *quia filium Dei se fecit.*[30] Ast illa, di-

[28] Rom. viii, 29.
[29] De Virgin., L. II, c. 2.
[30] Ioann. XIX, 7.

vinitatem in eo constantissime agnoscit et colit. Demortuum sepulchro infert, nec tamen dubitat revicturum. Caritas porro, qua in Deum flagrat, participem *passionum Christi* sociamque efficit; cumque eo, sui veluti doloris oblita, veniam interfectoribus precatur, quamvis hi obfirmate inclamant: *Sanguis eius super nos, et super filios nostros.*[31]

Sed ne immaculati Virginis conceptus, qui nobis caussa scribendi est, contemplationem deseruisse videamur, quam is magna atque propria importat adiumenta ad has ipsas retinendas virtutes riteque colendas!—Et revera, quaenam osores fidei initia ponunt tantos quoquoversus errores spargendi, quibus apud multos fides ipsa nutat? Negant nimirum hominem peccato lapsum suoque de gradu aliquando deiectum. Hinc originalem labem commentitiis rebus accensent, quaeque inde evenerunt damna; corruptam videlicet originem humanae gentis, universamque ex eo progeniem hominum vitiatam; atque adeo mortalibus invectum malum impositamque reparatoris necessitudinem. His autem positis, pronum est intelligere nullum amplius Christo esse locum neque ecclesiae, neque gratiae, neque ordini cuipiam qui naturam praetergrediatur; uno verbo, tota fidei aedificatio penitus labefactatur.—Atqui credant gentes ac profiteantur Mariam Virginem primo suae conceptionis momento, omni labe fuisse immunem; iam etiam originalem noxam, hominum reparationem per Christum, evangelium, ecclesiam, ipsam denique perpetiendi legem admittant necesse est: quibus omnibus, *rationalismi* et *materialismi* quidquid est radicitus evellitur atque excutitur, manetque christianae sapientiae laus custodiendae tuendaeque veritatis.—Ad haec, commune hoc fidei hostibus vitium est, nostra praesertim aetate, ad fidem eam-

[31] Matth. XXVII. 25.

dem facilius eradendam animis, ut auctoritatis Ecclesiae, quin et cuiusvis in hominibus potestatis, reverentiam et obedientiam abiiciant abiiciendamque inclament. Hinc *anarchismi* exordia; quo nihil rerum ordini, tum qui ex natura est tum qui supra naturam, infestius ac pestilentius. Iamvero hanc quoque pestem, publicae pariter et christianae rei funestissimam, immaculati Deiparae conceptus delet dogma; quo nempe cogimur eam Ecclesiae tribuere potestatem cui non voluntatem animi tantum, sed mentem etiam subjicere necesse est: siquidem ex huiusmodi subiectione rationis christiana plebs Deiparam concinit: *Tota pulchra es, Maria, et macula originalis non est in te.*[32]—Sic porro rursum conficitur Virgini augustae hoc dari merito ab Ecclesia, *cunctas haereses solam interemisse in universo mundo.*

Quod si fides, ut inquit Apostolus, nihil est aliud nisi *sperandarum substantia rerum;*[33] facile quisque dabit immaculata Virginis conceptione confirmari simul fidem, simul ad spem nos erigi. Eo sane vel magis quia Virgo ipsa expers primaevae labis fuit quod Christi mater futura erat; Christi autem mater fuit, ut nobis aeternorum bonorum spes redintegraretur.

Iam ut caritatem in Deum tacitam nunc relinquamus, ecquis Immaculatae Virginis contemplatione non excitetur ad praeceptum illud sancte custodiendum, quod Iesus per antonomasiam suum dixit, scilicet ut diligamus invicem sicut ipse dilexit nos?—*Signum magnum,* sic apostolus Ioannes demissum sibi divinitus visum enarrat, *signum magnum apparuit in caelo: Mulier amicta sole, et luna sub pedibus eius, et in capite eius corona stellarum duodecim.*[34] Nullus autem

[32] Grad. Miss. in festo Imm. Concept.
[33] Hebr. XI, 1.
[34] Apoc. XII, 1.

ignorat, mulierem illam, Virginem Mariam significasse, quae caput nostrum integra peperit. Sequitur porro Apostolus: *Et in utero habens, clamabat parturiens, et cruciabatur ut pariat.*[35] Vidit igitur Ioannes sanctissimam Dei Matrem aeterna iam beatitata fruentem et tamen ex arcano quodam partu laborantem. Quonam autem partu? Nostrum plane, qui exilio adhuc detenti, ad perfectam Dei caritatem sempiternamque felicitatem gignendi adhuc sumus. Parientis vero labor studium atque amorem indicat, quo Virgo, in caelesti sede, vigilat assiduaque prece contendit ut electorum numerus expleatur.

Eamdem hanc caritatem ut omnes nitantur assequi quotquot ubique christiano nomine censentur vehementer optamus, occasione hac praesertim arrepta immaculati Deiparae conceptus solemnius celebrandi. Quam modo acriter efferateque Christus impetitur atque ab eo condita religio sanctissima! quam idcirco praesens multis periculum iniicitur, ne gliscentibus erroribus ducti, a fide desciscant! *Itaque qui se existimat stare, videat ne cadat.*[36] Simul vero prece et obsecratione humili utantur omnes ad Deum, conciliatrice Deipara, ut qui a vero aberraverint resipiscant. Experiendo quippe novimus eiusmodi precem, quae caritate funditur et Virginis sanctae imploratione fulcitur, irritam fuisse numquam. Equidem oppugnari Ecclesian neque in posterum unquam cessabitur: *Nam oportet et haereses esse, ut et qui probati sunt, manifesti fiant in vobis.*[37] Sed nec Virgo ipsa cessabit nostris adesse rebus ut ut difficillimis, pugnamque prosequi iam inde a conceptu pugnatam, ut quotidie iterare

[35] Apoc. XII, 2.
[36] I Cor. x, 12.
[37] I Cor. XI, 19.

liceat illud: *Hodie contritum est ab ea caput serpentis antiqui.*[38]

Utque caelestium gratiarum munere solito abundantius, nos iuvent ad imitationem beatissimae Virginis cum honoribus coniungendam, quos illi ampliores hunc totum annum tribuemus; atque ita propositum facilius assequamur instaurandi omnia in Christo: exemplo Decessorum usi quum Pontificatum inirent, indulgentiam extraordinem, instar Iubilaei, orbi catholico impertiri decrevimus.

Quamobrem de omnipotentis Dei misericordia, ac beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli auctoritate confisi, ex illa ligandi atque solvendi potestate, quam Nobis Dominus, licet indignis, contulit; universis et singulis utriusque sexus christifidelibus in alma Urbe Nostra degentibus vel ad eam advenientibus, qui unam e quatuor Basilicis patriarchalibus, a Dominica prima Quadragesimae, nempe a die XXI februarii, usque ad diem II Iunii inclusive, qui erit solemnitas sanctissimi Corporis Christi, ter visitaverint; ibique per aliquod temporis spatium pro catholicae Ecclesiae atque huius Apostolicae Sedis libertate et exaltatione, pro extirpatione haeresum omniumque errantium conversione, pro christianorum Principum concordia ac totius fidelis populi pace et unitate, iuxtaque mentem Nostram pias ad Deum preces effuderint; ac semel, intra praefatum tempus, esurialibus tantum cibis utentes ieiunaverint, praeter dies in quadragesimali indulto non comprehensos; et, peccata sua confessi, sanctissimum Eucharistiae sacramentum susceperint; ceteris vero ubicumque, extra praedictam Urbem degentibus, qui ecclesiam cathedralem, si sit eo loci, vel parochialem aut, si parochialis desit, principalem, supra dicto tempore vel per tres menses

[38] Off. Imm. Conc. in II Vesp. ad *Magnif.*

etiam non continuos, Ordinariorum arbitrio, pro fidelium commodo praecise designandos, ante tamen diem VIII mensis decembris, ter visitaverint; aliaque recensita opera devote peregerint: plenissimam omnium peccatorum suorum indulgentiam concedimus et impertimus; annuentes insuper ut eiusmodi indulgentia, semel tantum lucranda, animabus, quae Deo caritate coniunctae ex hac vita migraverint, per modum suffragii applicari possit et valeat.

Concedimus praeterea ut navigantes atque iter agentes, quum primum ad sua domicilia se receperint, operibus supra notatis peractis, eamdem indulgentiam possint consequi.

Confessariis autem, actu approbatis a propriis Ordinariis, potestatem facimus ut praedicta opera, a Nobis iniuncta, in alia pietatis opera commutare valeant in favorem Regularium utriusque sexus, nec non aliorum quorumcumque qui ea praestare nequiverint, cum facultate etiam dispensandi super Communione cum pueris, qui ad eamdem suspiciendam nondum fuerint admissi.

Insuper omnibus et singulis christifidelibus tam laicis quam ecclesiasticis sive saecularibus sive regularibus cuiusvis ordinis et instituti, etiam specialiter nominandi, licentiam concedimus et facultatem ut sibi, ad hunc effectum, eligere possint quemcumque presbyterum tam regularem quam saecularem, ex actu approbatis (qua facultate uti possint etiam moniales, novitiae aliaeque mulieres intra claustra degentes, dummodo confessarius approbatus sit pro monialibus) qui eosdem vel easdem, infra dictum temporis spatium, ad confessionem apud peragendam accedentes, cum animo praesens iubilaeum assequendi, nec non reliqua opera ad illud lucrandum necessaria adimplendi, hac vice et in foro conscientiae dumtaxat, ab excommunicationis, suspensionis aliisque

ecclesiasticis sententiis et censuris, a iure vel ab homine quavis de causa latis seu inflictis, etiam Ordinariis locorum et Nobis seu Sedi Apostolicae, etiam in casibus cuicumque ac Summo Pontifici et Sedi Apostolicae *speciali licet modo* reservatis, nec non ab omnibus peccatis et excessibus etiam iisdem Ordinariis ac Nobis et Sedi Apostolicae reservatis, iniuncta prius poenitentia salutari aliisque de iure iniungendis, et si de haeresi agatur, abiuratis antea et retractatis erroribus, prout de iure, absolvere; nec non vota quaecumque etiam iurata et Sedi Apostolicae reservata (castitatis)relligionis, et obligationis, quae a tertio acceptata fuerit, exceptis, in alia pia et salutaria opera commutare et cum poenitentibus eiusmodi in sacris ordinibus constituis etiam regularibus, super occulta irregularitate ad exercitium eorumdem ordinum et ad superiorum assequutionem, ob censurarum violationem dumataxat, contracta, dispensare possit et valeat.—Non intendimus autem per praesentes super alia quavis irregularitate sive ex delicto sive ex defectu, vel publica occulta aut nota aliave incapacitate aut inhabilitate quoquomodo contracta dispensare; neque etiam derogare. Constitutioni cum appositis declarationibus editae a fel. rec. Benedicto XIV, quae incipit *"Sacramentum poenitentiae;"* neque demum easdem praesentes litteras iis, qui a Nobis et Apostolica Sede, vel ab aliquo Praelato, seu Iudice ecclesiastico nominatim excommunicati, suspensi, interdicti seu alias in sententias et censuras incidisse declarati, vel publice denuntiati fuerint, nisi intra praedictum tempus satisfecerint, et cum partibus, ubi opus fuerit, concordaverint, ullo modo suffragari posse et debere.

Ad haec libet adiicere, velle Nos et concedere, integrum cuicumque, hoc etiam Iubilaei tempore, permanere, privile-

gium lucrandi quasvis indulgentias, plenariis non exceptis quae a Nobis vel a Decessoribus Nostris concessae fuerint.

Finem vero, Venerabiles Fratres, scribendi facimus, spem magnam iterum testantes, qua plane ducimur, fore ut, ex hoc Iubilaei munere extraordinario, auspice Virgine Immaculata a Nobis concesso, quamplurimi, qui misere a Iesu Christo seiuncti sunt, ad eum revertantur, atque in christiano populo virtutum amor pietatisque ardor refloreat. Quinquaginta abhinc annos, quum Pius decessor beatissimam Christi Matrem ab origine labis nesciam fide catholica tenendam edixit, incredibilis, ut diximus, caelestium gratiarum copia effundi in hasce terras visa est; et, aucta in Virginem Deiparam spe, ad veterem populorum religionem magna ubique accessio est allata. Quidnam vero ampliora in posterum expectare prohibet? In funesta sane incidimus tempora; ut prophetae verbis conqueri possimus jure: *Non est enim veritas, et non est misericordia, et non est scientia Dei in terra. Maledictum, et mendacium, et homicidium, et furtum, et adulterium inundaverunt.*[39] Attamen, in hoc quasi malorum diluvio, iridis instar Virgo clementissima versatur ante oculos, faciendae pacis Deum inter et homines quasi arbitra. *Arcum meum ponam in nubibus, et erit signum foederis inter me et inter terram.*[40] Saeviat licet procella et caelum atra nocte occupetur; nemo animi incertus esto. Mariae adspectu placabitur Deus et parcet. *Eritque arcus in nubibus, et videbo illum, et recordabor foederis sempiterni.*[41] *Et non erunt ultra aquae diluvii ad delendum universam carnem.*[42] Profecto si Mariae, ut par est, confidimus, praesertim modo quum immaculatum

[39] Os. iv, 1-2.
[40] Gen. ix, 13.
[41] Ib. 16.
[42] Ib. 15.

eius conceptum alacriore studio celebrabimus; nunc quoque illam sentiemus esse Virginem potentissimam, *quae serpentis caput virgineo pede contrivit.*[43]

Horum munerum auspicem, Venerabiles Fratres, vobis populisque vestris apostolicam benedictionem amantissime in Domino impertimus.

Datum Romae apud S. Petrum, die II Februarii MCMIV, Pontificatus Nostri anno primo.

PIUS PP. X.

[43] Off. Imm. Conc. B. M. V.

THE UNFINISHED MOSAIC

Part of the Famous Murillo Mosaic as it Appeared September, 1928. Donation of Popes to the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

CHAPTER XIX

LETTER OF SAINT BERNARD
(*Circa* A.D. 1140)

To the Canons of Lyons, on the Conception of S. Mary.

Bernard states that the Festival of the Conception was new; that it rested on no legitimate foundation; and that it should not have been instituted without consulting the Apostolic See, to whose opinion he submits.

1. It is well known that among all the Churches of France that of Lyons is first in importance, whether we regard the dignity of its See, its praiseworthy regulations, or its honourable zeal for learning. Where was there ever the vigour of discipline more flourishing, a more grave and religious life, more consummate wisdom, a greater weight of authority, a more imposing antiquity? Especially in the Offices of the Church, that of Lyons has always shown itself opposed to attempts at sudden innovation, and it is a proof of her fulness of judgment that she has never suffered herself to be stained with the mark of rash and hasty levity. Wherefore I cannot but wonder that there should have been among you at this time some who wished to sully this splendid fame of your Church by introducing a new Festival, a rite which the Church knows nothing of, and which reason does not prove, nor ancient tradition hand down to us. Have we the pretension to be more learned or more devoted than the Fathers? It is a dangerous presumption to establish in such a matter

what their prudence left unestablished. And the matter in question is of such a nature that it could not possibly have escaped the diligence of the Fathers if they had not thought that they ought not to occupy themselves with it.

2. The Mother of the Lord, you say, ought greatly to be honoured. You say well, but the honour of a queen loves justice. The royal Virgin does not need false honour, since she is amply supplied with true titles to honour and badges of her dignity. Honour indeed the purity of her flesh, the sanctity of her life, wonder at her motherhood as a virgin, adore her Divine offspring. Extol the prodigy by which she brought into the world without pain the Son, whom she had conceived without concupiscence. Proclaim her to be reverenced by the angels, to have been desired by the nations, to have been known beforehand by Patriarchs and Prophets, chosen by God out of all women and raised above them all. Magnify her as the medium by whom grace was displayed, the instrument of salvation, the restorer of the ages; and finally extol her as having been exalted above the choirs of angels to the celestial realms. These things the Church sings concerning her, and has taught me to repeat the same things in her praise, and what I have learnt from the Church I both hold securely myself and teach to others; what I have not received from the Church I confess I should with great difficulty admit. I have received then from the Church that day to be reverenced with the highest veneration, when being taken up from this sinful earth, she made entry into the heavens; a festival of most honoured joy. With no less clearness have I learned in the Church to celebrate the birth of the Virgin, and from the Church undoubtedly to hold it to have been holy and joyful; holding most firmly with the Church,

that she received in the womb that she should come into the world holy. And indeed I read concerning Jeremiah, that before he came forth from the womb [*ventre:* otherwise *de vulva*] he was sanctified, and I think no otherwise of John the Baptist, who, himself in the womb of his mother, felt the presence of his Lord in the womb (S. Luke i. 41). It is matter for consideration whether the same opinion may not be held of holy David, on account of what he said in addressing God: *In Thee I have been strengthened from the womb: Thou art He who took me out of my mother's bowels* (Ps. lxxi. 6); and again: *I was cast upon Thee from the womb: Thou art my God from my mother's belly* (Ps. xxii. 10). And Jeremiah is thus addressed: *Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest out of the womb I sanctified thee* (Jer. i. 5). How beautifully the Divine oracle has distinguished between conception in the womb and birth from the womb! and showed that if the one was foreseen only, the other was blessed beforehand with the gift of holiness: that no one might think that the glory of Jeremiah consisted only in being the object of the foreknowledge of God, but also of His predestination.

3. Let us, however, grant this in the case of Jeremiah. What shall be said of John the Baptist, of whom an angel announced beforehand that he should be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb? I cannot suppose that this is to be referred to predestination or to foreknowledge. For the words of the angel were without doubt fulfilled in their time, as he foretold; and the man (as cannot be doubted) filled with the Holy Ghost at the time and place appointed, as he predicted. But most certainly the Holy Ghost sanctified the man whom He filled. But how far this

sanctification availed against original sin, whether for him, or for that prophet, or for any other who was thus prevented by grace, I would not rashly determine. But of these holy persons whom God has sanctified, and brought forth from the womb with the same sanctification which they have received in the womb, I do not hesitate to say that the taint of original sin which they contracted in conception, could not in any manner take away or fetter by the mere act of birth, the benediction already bestowed. Would any one dare to say that a child filled with the Holy Ghost, would remain notwithstanding a child of wrath; and if he had died in his mother's womb, where he had received this fulness of the Spirit, would endure the pains of damnation? That opinion is very severe; I, however, do not dare to decide anything respecting the question by my own judgment. However that may be, the Church, which regards and declares, not the nativity, but only the death of other saints as precious, makes a singular exception for him of whom an angel singularly said, *and many shall rejoice in his birth* (S. Luke i. 14, 15), and with rejoicing honours his nativity. For why should not the birth be holy, and even glad and joyful, of one who leaped with joy even in the womb of his mother?

4. The gift, therefore, which has certainly been conferred upon some, though few, mortals, cannot for a moment be supposed to have been denied to that so highly favoured Virgin, through whom the whole human race came forth into life. Beyond doubt the mother of the Lord also was holy before birth; nor is holy Church at all in error in accounting the day of her nativity holy, and celebrating it each year with solemn and thankful joy. I consider that the blessing of a fuller sanctification descended upon her, so as not only to sanctify

her birth, but also to keep her life pure from all sin; which gift is believed to have been bestowed upon none other born of women. This singular privilege of sanctity, to lead her life without any sin, entirely befitted the queen of virgins, who should bear the Destroyer of sin and death, who should obtain the gift of life and righteousness for all. Therefore, her birth was holy, since the abundant sanctity bestowed upon it made it holy even from the womb.

5. What addition can possibly be made to these honours? That her conception, also, they say, which preceded her honourable birth, should be honoured, since if the one had not first taken place, neither would the other, which is honoured. But what if some one else, following a similar train of reasoning, should assert that the honours of a festival ought to be given to each of her parents, then to her grandparents, and then to their parents, and so on *ad infinitum?* Thus we should have festivals without number. Such a frequency of joys befits Heaven, not this state of exile. It is the happy lot of those who dwell there, not of strangers and pilgrims. But a writing is brought forward, given, as they say, by revelation from on high,[1] as if any one would not be able to bring forward another writing in which the Virgin should seem to demand the same honours to her parents also, saying, according to the commandment of the Lord, *Honour thy father and thy mother* (Exod. xx. 12). I easily persuade myself not to be influenced by such writings, which are supported neither by reason nor by any certain authority. For how does the consequence follow that since the conception has preceded the birth, and the birth is holy, the conception should be con-

[1] A writing of this kind is attributed to an English abbot named Elsin in the works of Anselm, pp. 505, 507 of the new edition.

sidered holy also? Did it make the birth holy because it preceded it? Although the one came first that the other might be, yet not that it might be holy. From whence came that holiness to the conception which was to be transmitted to the birth which followed? Was it not rather because the conception preceded without holiness that it was needful for the being conceived to be sanctified, that a holy birth might then follow? Or shall we say that the birth which was later than the conception shared with it its holiness? It might be, indeed, that the sanctification which was worked in her when conceived passed over to the birth which followed; but it could not be possible that it should have a retrospective effect upon the conception which had preceded it.

6. Whence, then, was the holiness of that conception? Shall it be said that Mary was so prevented by grace that, being holy before being conceived, she was therefore conceived without sin; or that, being holy before being born, she has therefore communicated holiness to her birth? But in order to be holy it is necessary to exist, and a person does not exist before being conceived. Or perhaps, when her parents were united, holiness was mingled with the conception itself, so that she was at once conceived and sanctified. But this is not tenable in reason. For how can there be sanctity without the sanctifying Spirit, or the co-operation of the Holy Spirit with sin? Or how could there not be sin where concupiscence was not wanting? Unless, perhaps, some one will say that she was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and not by man, which would be a thing hitherto unheard of. I say, then, that the Holy Spirit came upon her, not within her, as the Angel declared: *The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee* (S. Luke i. 35). And if it is permitted to say what the

Church thinks, and the Church thinks that which is true, I say that she conceived by the Holy Spirit, but not that she was conceived by Him; that she was at once Mother and Virgin, but not that she was born of a virgin. Otherwise, where will be the prerogative of the Mother of the Lord, to have united in her person the glory of maternity and that of virginity, if you give the same glory to her mother also? This is not to honour the Virgin, but to detract from her honour. If, therefore, before her conception she could not possibly be sanctified, since she did not exist, nor in the conception itself, because of the sin which inhered in it, it remains to be believed that she received sanctification when existing in the womb after conception, which, by excluding sin, made her birth holy, but not her conception.

7. Wherefore, although it has been given to some, though few, of the sons of men to be born with the gift of sanctity, yet to none has it been given to be conceived with it. So that to One alone should be reserved this privilege, to Him who should make all holy, and coming into the world, He alone, without sin should make an atonement for sinners. The Lord Jesus, then, alone was conceived by the Holy Ghost, because He alone was holy before He was conceived. He being excepted, all the children of Adam are in the same case as he who confessed of himself with great humility and truth, *I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin hath my mother conceived me* (Ps. li. 6).

8. And as this is so, what ground can there be fore a Festival of the Conception of the Virgin? On what principle, I say, is either a conception asserted to be holy which is not by the Holy Ghost, not to say that it is by sin, or a festival be established which is in no wise holy? Willingly the glorious

Virgin will be without this honour, by which either a sin seems to be honoured or a sanctity supposed which is not a fact. And, besides, she will by no means be pleased by a presumptuous novelty against the custom of the Church, a novelty which is the mother of rashness, the sister of superstition, the daughter of levity. For if such a festival seemed advisable, the authority of the Apostolic See ought first to have been consulted, and the simplicity of inexperienced persons ought not to have been followed so thoughtlessly and precipitately. And, indeed, I had before noted that error in some persons; but I appeared not to take notice of it, dealing gently with a devotion which sprang from simplicity of heart and love of the Virgin. But now that the *superstition* has taken hold upon wise men, and upon a famous and noble Church, of which I am specially the son,[1] I know not whether I could longer pass it over without gravely offending you all. But what *I have said is in submission to the judgment of whosoever is wiser than myself;* and especially *I refer* the whole of it, as of all matters of a similar kind, to the *authority and decision of the See of Rome,* and I am *prepared to modify my opinion if in anything I think otherwise than that See.*

[1] The Church of Lyons was the Mother Church of Bernard because of its "metropolitan rights," as he himself says in Letter 172, since he was born at Fontaines, near Dijon, and lived at the monastery of Clairvaux, both of which places were in the Diocese of Langres and Province of Lyons.

NOTES ON THE LETTER OF ST. BERNARD

I

Rev. Thomas à Kempis Reilly, O. P., Professor of Sacred Scripture at Immaculate Conception College, Washington, D. C., writes in *"Messages of Truth"* (Philadelphia, 1911) p. 104 sq.:

"It was perhaps owing to Anselm's repeated missions to Normandy (1115 and 1119) as Apostolic Legate that the devotion (Feast of the Conception) took root in that country. From Normandy the pious movement passed into France, where it grew so rapidly that, by the year 1154, the entire Christian populace of the nation patronized it. It was at this juncture that St. Bernard sent his celebrated epistle to Lyons in which he severely censured the institution of the feast in that city as an "innovation." Many theologians strive to excuse this action of the mellifluous doctor by maintaining that the author failed to grasp the meaning of the mystery in its proper light. They argue also that he would not have displayed such unwonted hostility if the canons concerned had procured the approval of the Holy See.

Whatever may have been the intention of St. Bernard in writing the epistle, it is an historical fact that by it he placed a temporary damper on the growth of the devotion, and furnished its opponents with efficient weapons. His untoward influence must have been felt the more because he was otherwise so unbounded and effusive in his praises of Mary.

St. Bernard and other representative Catholic doctors of the medieval period seemed to have apprehended the law of original sin as being so stringent and universal that absolutely no one who had been endowed with existence by human progenitors, could escape its yoke. In the case of our

divine Saviour alone, it appeared to them, was the curse of Eden totally suspended, or, more properly, removed, and this was by reason of his miraculous human origin as well as His divinity."

II

Le Bachelet (Dict. de Théol. cath. vol. VII, col. 1015) refers to the following works on the matter:

Sur la fête: E. Vacandard, *Saint Bernard et la fête de la Conception de la sainte Vierge,* dans la *Science catholique,* Amiens, 1893, vol. VII, p. 897; *Vie de Saint-Bernard,* Paris, 1895, vol. II. p. 81, sq.; *Les origines de la fête et du dogme de l'immaculée conception, I. p. 29-32.* M. *Bernard, L'Eglise de Lyon et l'immaculée conception.* Essai théologio-historique, Lyon, 1897; chanoine I.-B. Vanel, *Lyon et Marie,* dans le *Compte rendu du congrès marial,* tenu à Lyon les 5, 6, 7 et 8 Septembre 1900, vol. I, page 340 sq.

From the books Le Bachelet refers to "Sur la croyance" and "Dans un sens apologétique," we choose Mabillon, *S. Bernardi opera,* Paris 1667, vol. I, ad calcem, nota 141, Christian Pesch, *Praelectiones dogmaticae,* vol. III, *De Deo Creante,* Fribourg-en-Breisgau, 1899, p. 318 sq., A. Ballerini, *De S. Bernardi scriptis circa Virginis conceptionem dissertatio-critica,* Rome 1856; reprinted in *Sylloge monumentorum* of the same author, Paris 1855-57, vol. II, p. 712 sq.

On the origin of the feast in Lyon, Le Bachelet writes:

"Laissons de côté les assertions inexactes ou insuffisamment établies, par exemple, que le pape Pascal II, consacrant en 1106 la nouvelle basilique de l'abbaye d'Ainay, y aurait béni un autel sous le vocable de la conception immaculée de Marie, comme il est rapporté dans la *Chronique de la très ancienne abbaye royale d'Ainay* par le chanoine J.B. Lamure; ou que

Gaucérand, d'abord abbé de ce monastère, puis primat des Gaules (1107-1118) aurait été le véritable promoteur du culte de la Conception, comme on lit dans *Lyon et Marie* du chanoine J.-B. Vanel, Le fait historique, c'est l'existence de la fête à la primatiale de Saint-Jean dans le second quart du XII[e] siècle, ou d'une façon plus précise, l'an 1136, s'il faut en croire, Pierre de Alva, *Funiculi nodi indissolubilis,* Bruxelles, 1663, p. 229: 1136. *In sancta Ecclesia Lugdunensi solemniter celebratur conceptionis festum, ut constat ex quodam instrumento authentico a nobis viso et lecto apud D. D. Andream Sausay, cum sigillo Capituli Lugdunensis.* D'après le contexte, c'est d'André du Saussay, évêque de Toul au XVII[e] siècle, qu'il s'agit. Le Bachelet does not reject the supposition that the feast was imported from England, but he does not believe that it was St. Anselm who propagated it. He suggests Anselm the younger: "Il n'est pas hors de propos de rappeler que son *alter ego,* Anselme le jeune, avait passé par Lyon, comme par Rouen quand il rentra dans son monastère de Cluses après la mort de son oncle et, plus tard, quand il revint de Rome en Angleterre avec le titre de légat apostolique. L'allusion que, dans sa lettre, Saint Bernard fait au récit d'une révélation céleste qu'on mettait en avant, *profertur scriptum supernae, ut aiunt, revelationis* reporte naturellement l'esprit à la vision d'Helsin et suggère la probabilité d'une dépendance entre Lyon et l'Angleterre, en ce qui concerne le culte de la conception. Conjecture dont la valeur croîtrait beaucoup, s'il était permis d'interprêter *l'objet de la fête lyonnaise au XII siècle d'après le missel imprimé de l'abbaye d'Ainay;* car si ce livre ne date que du XVI[e] siècle, *il reproduit manifestement un texte ancien.* Le culte s'y adresse à la mère de Dieu, considérée dans sa pureté et son innocence ineffables: *ut qui ineffabilis ejus innocentiae puri-*

tatem sincera devotione confitemur (Postcommunion). Il s'adresse aussi à sa conception proclamée sainte: *ut qui sanctissimum ejus conceptum per hec sacra mysteria jubilando veneramur* (Secrète). Il s'étend même au corps de la bienheureuse Vierge, lui aussi déclaré saint et préservé de toute souillure du péché: *Omnipotens et misericors Deus, qui corpus beatissime Virginis Marie sanctum esse preordinasti, et ab omni peccati immundicia preservasti, ut Verbum tuum ex eo carnem assumeret* (*Première oraison*). *Incliti cenobii athanatensis in dioecesi Lugd. ordinis divi Benedicti missale nunquam antea impressum,* avec cette indication à la fin du volume: *impressum in dicto monasterio athanatensi anno domini 1531.* Cette manière d'envisager la fête de la conception n'est-elle pas celle-là même que nous avons rencontrée dans les écrits d'Eadmer et d'Osbert de Clare?

Quoiqu'il en soit de l'influence subie et du motif déterminant, les chanoines de la primatiale avaient adopté la fête, et c'est là ce qui détermina l'intervention de Saint Bernard. Depuis quelque temps, il suivait le mouvement d'un oeil inquiet, gardant le silence avec une certaine impatience, "*par égard pour la piété de ceux qui agissaient de la sorte dans la simplicité de leur coeur et par amour de la Vierge.*" Jugeant que le temps de réagir était venu, il écrivit vers 1138 (date donnée par Pierre de Alva et préférable à celle de 1128-1130 proposée par M. l'abbé Vacandard) sa fameuse lettre *ad canonicos Lugdunenses Epist.,* CLXXIV, P. L., vol. CLXXXII, col. 332."

"Les critiques ont tenu communément l'illustre abbé de Clairvaux pour son auteur. Il y a eu néanmoins des dénégations ou des doutes; le P. Antoine Ballerini, en particulier, a soutenu dans une étude spéciale que la lettre aux chanoines de Lyon est l'oeuvre d'un faussaire, secrétaire de Saint Ber-

nard et chassé plus tard du monastère pour abus de confiance. La Lettre est Réellement Authentique, y Compris la Phrase Finale D'adhèsion Anticipée au Futur Jugement de *Rome*. Elle est authentique, comme le second sermon sur l'Assomption, où la même doctrine se retrouve, n. 8, P. L., volume CLXXXIII, col. 420. Vacandard, Les origines de la fête, dans la *Revue du clergé français,* vol. XLII, p. 29, note 2, et p. 40, note 3.

As for the teachings of St. Bernard, Le Bachelet says to do him justice: "D'après le docteur cistercien, la sanctification première de la bienheureuse Vierge, celle qu'il lui attribue dès le sein de sa mère, est une sanctification *exceptionnelle et transcendante,* entraînant pour la vie entière l'exemption de tout péché, n. 5: *Ego puto, quod et copiosior sanctificationis benedictio in eam descenderit, quae ipsius non solum sanctificaret ortum, sed et vitam ab omni deinceps peccato custodiret immunem.* Aussi, meilleur exégète en ce point que la plupart de ses contemporains, il entend les paroles de l'ange: *Spiritus Sanctus superveniet in te,* non point d'une purification quelconque, mais d'une surcoissance dans la plénitude de la grâce: *nunc supervenire nuntiatur propter abundantioris gratiae plenitudinem, quam effuturus est super illam. Homil.,* IV, *super Missus est,* n. 3, P. L., *vol.* CLXXXIII, col. 81, En Marie il salue la nouvelle Eve qui, associée au nouvel Adam, écrase la tête du serpent. Voir Dict. de Théol. Cath. vol. VII, col. 856. Par Là S'explique Que, Malgré la Lacune du Début, la Mariologie de Saint Bernard Soit Restée si Belle et si Riche et Digne de la *Mère de Dieu*. Considération propre à tempérer le regret qu'on éprouve naturellement de ne pas pouvoir compter le "docteur de Marie" parmi les apôtres du glorieux privilège."

III

*For Newman the doctrine intimately harmonizes with the circle of recognized dogmatic truths into which it had been received. There should be no intellectual difficulties for Catholics on this score. The doctrine was defined precisely because Catholics believed and held it, and when it was promulgated it was acclaimed with universal enthusiasm.

There were, however, some shining lights in the Church who in the past seemed to scruple on the point. The opposition of a St. Bernard or a St. Thomas, if it may be termed such, was rather due to a misunderstanding of the significance of the dogma as it is held today. In Newman's view, their difficulty was rather a matter of "words, ideas, and arguments." He asserts also that they took the terms as referring to our Lady's mother, namely, that she virginally conceived the Blessed Virgin; nor could they reconcile this doctrine with others. It was necessary, first, to precise the terms in which the doctrine was to be expressed, and then it would be found that those who seemingly opposed it would have become ardent proponents of the belief.

For both of these Doctors of the Church, the root of the difficulty lay in reconciling Mary's perfect sinlessness with the doctrine of the universality of original sin. "Whence would come the sanctity of this conception?" asks St. Ber-

* Taken from *The Mariology of Cardinal Newman* by Rev. Francis J. Friedel, S.M., S.T.D. (Marianist), 1928, Benziger Brothers, New York.

nard. "May it be said that Mary previously sanctified would have been holy already when she was conceived, and that in consequence her conception was also holy. Thus, she was said to have been sanctified in the womb of her mother so that her birth also might be holy. But Mary could not have been holy before she existed, and she did not exist before she was conceived. Will it be said that in the act of generation, sanctity was associated with conception and thus there was simultaneously conception and sanctification? Reason opposes itself to such a hypothesis. How could there have been sanctity without the sanctifying Spirit? or how could the Holy Ghost have been associated with sin? or how could there not be sin when there was carnal pleasure? There is no way out of this unless we admit, what is unheard of, that Mary was conceived of the Holy Ghost and not of man."

"St. Thomas, on the other hand, distinguishes the time before the infusion of the rational soul and the very moment of this infusion. He rejects categorically a sanctification before the infusion of the soul; for if the soul is not present, there is no subject to receive grace. He held that the conferring of sanctifying grace at the very moment of union between body and soul cannot be admitted either, for this is the exclusive privilege of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer. It is not impossible that there should have been an exception to the universal law under which all men contract original sin, but it was not suitable to the dignity of the Redeemer, and hence even the Blessed Virgin had to contract the stain, for like every child of Adam she had to be truly and personally redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ. Centuries had to elapse until the whole question had been elaborated by the

Schools to show that the Immaculate Conception did not exclude personal redemption by Christ.*

Thus, as Newman taught, these Doctors could admit an Immaculate Conception that implied a miraculous conception. It is necessary for him also, to call the attention of non-Catholic opponents who stumble at the doctrine to the fact that it concerns only her own person and not her parents at all."

* Cf. Del Prado, *Divus Thomas et Bulla Dogmatica, "Ineffabilis Deus."* Marin-Sola, op. cit. p. 322 sqq.

MARY IMMACULATE

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CHAPTER XX

FRANCE

I

The feast of the Conception in France

The first date for the celebration of the feast in France known to us is 1140, but Le Bachelet says that the documents referring to it need confirmation. It was celebrated in 1140 in the Church of Narbonne, cf. Pierre d'Alva in *Funiculi nodi indissolubilis,* p. 29, according to a manuscript of the bishop of Toul, André du Saussay: *Series chronologica rerum in Ecclesia occidentali gestarum circa celebratiorum Festi cultum, que mysteria immaculatae conceptionis S^mae Dei Genitricis Mariae, ab ipsius, Festi institutione ad hoc usque tempora.* In 1154, Atton, prior of the Benedictine monastery of Saint-Pierre de la Réole, in the diocese of Bazas instituted the feast in presence and with the authority of the bishop Guillaume de Tantalon. Atton justifies the introduction of the new solemnity by asserting *"que le peuple chrétien la célèbre maintenant en France presque universellement et avec la plus grande dévotion"* cf. Martène, *De antiquis monachorum ritibus,* Lyon, 1690, l. IV, c. II, n. 16; A Degert, *Le culte de l'immaculée conception en Gascogne,* Auch 1904, pages 533, 544. The celebration of the feast in

cf. Le Bachelet, Dict. de Théol. Cath., vol. VII, col. 1033-34.

different parts of France at this time is confirmed by missals and other liturgical documents kept in the French public libraries: a Parisian missal in the Bibliothèque Mazarine; in Paris a missel angevin in the collection Delbrel in Nantes; in Rouen there are several missals from the abbayes of Jumièges and Fécamp and of Rouen (abbaye de Saint-Ouen and cathedral); besides a sacramentaire d'Avranches of the Xth century that has inserted in the XIIth century a mass of the Conception, identical to the mass of the missal of Winchester (1220) which is contained already a century earlier in the missal of Léofric, cf. Le Bachelet, Dict. Théol. VII, col. 1005; A Noyon, *Notes bibliographiques,* July-October 1920, p. 307; L. Vacandard, *Les origines de la Fête de la Conception dans le diocése de Rouen,* p. 168 sq.; there is a *charte* composed by bishop Henri II (1155-1205) in Bayeux *"in capella nostra die lune post festum conceptionis beate Marie."* cf. *Cartularius antiquus ecclesie Baiocensis,* ed. V. Bourrienne, vol. I, p. 145.—In Rouen the archbishops Rotrou (1165-1183) and Gautier le Magnifique (1184-1207) instituted or confirmed a distribution of bread and wine for their chapter for the celebration of the feast of the 8th December. In 1197 a procession took place the 8th of December in the streets of Rouen.—In the region of Lyons the opposition of Saint Bernard did not prevail, as it is stated a century later, by the Dominican preacher Etienne de Bourbon: *"Lugdunensis ecclesie consuetudinem, que cum suis suffraganeis de conceptione eius festum fecit."* cf. A Lecoy de la Marche, *Anecdotes historiques, légendes et apologues, tirés du recueil inédit d'Etienne de Bourbon, dominicain du XIII^e siècle,* publiés par la Société de l'histoire de la France, Paris, 1879, pages 93 sq.—A calendar of the Church of Reims contains

on the 8th of December: *conceptio beate Marie* IX lect., IX cerei, mentioning a donation by Gui Pied-de-Loup who was canon in 1193 and 1197, cf. U. Chevalier, *Sacramentaire et martyrologe de l'abbaye de Saint-Rémy; Martyrologe, calendrier, ordinaires et prosaires de la métropole de Reims,* Paris 1900, page 90.

FRANCE

II

La Sorbonne and the French Clergy

In the XV century the Sorbonne, *"the firmament of science, the support of truth and piety in the Church of God"* took up the cause of the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It was the first university to introduce the oath obliging its members to defend the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. To the Sorbonne the pious belief was a doctrine, as we see from the decision noted by this great university the third of March 1496: "Statuentes ut nemo deinceps sacro huic nostro collegio adscribatur, nisi se hujus *religiosae doctrinae* assertorem strenuumque propugnatorem semper pro viribus futurum simile iuramento profiteatur."

We read in the article of *X. Le Bachelet* on the Immaculate Conception (Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, vol. VII, col. 1126): "Les constitutions sixtines étaient de nature à exciter le zèle de la grande université française dans l'affirmation et la défense du glorieux privilège; on le vit bientôt. En 1495, un frère mineur, prêchant à Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois, le 8 décembre, eut la singulière idée d'exposer alternativement matin et soir, les deux opinions relatives à la conception de la Vierge.—Le scandale fut considérable, et l'orateur dut faire publiquement amende honorable.—Deux ans plus tard, un dominicain, Jean Le Ver, prêchant à Dieuue, avança cette proposition: "La bienheureuse Vierge a été

purifiée de la faute originelle," et posa en même temps cette question : autrement, "comment aurait-elle pu réciter l'oraison dominicale, en particulier ces mots: Dimitte nobis debita nostra?" Enfin il ajouta qu'il n'y avait "ni péché grave ni hérésie à dire qu'elle a été conçue dans le péché originel." *La faculté de théologie censura ces propositions, la première comme "fausse, impie et offensive des oreilles pieuses, tendant à écarter les fidèles de la dévotion envers l'immaculée conception de la glorieuse vierge Marie, mère de Notre-Seigneur Jésus-Christ, et contraire au culte ecclésiastique, à la droite raison, à la Sainte Ecriture, et à la foi.* En conséquence, Jean Le Ver dut faire, le 16 septembre 1497 rétraction et réparation solennelle.—Ce fut à cette occasion que la Sorbonne prit une mesure d'une grande portée. Le 3 mars de la même année (1496 dans l'ancien style), elle décréta que désormais, *tous ceux qui voudraient obtenir les grades académiques, devraient s'engager par serment à défendre l'immaculée conception* de Marie.—Le décret fut publié le 23 août et le serment prêté le 17 septembre par 112 docteurs, 82 de rigore promoti dont les noms sont donnés par Jean Trithemius, à la fin d'un écrit intitulé: De purissima et immaculata conceptione virginis Mariae, et de festivate sancte Anne matris eius. *On y remarque 47 docteurs appartenant à des ordres religieux: 8 bénédictins, 3 cisterciens, 1 prémontré, 13 dominicains, 8 franciscains, 7 augustins, 5 carmes et 1 Servite.*—La Sorbonne prit cet engagement au sérieux; elle le prouva en plusieurs circonstances notables." After having shown how the Sorbonne fought Luther, Le Bachelet continues: "Un dominicain ayant insinué en 1543, que la Vierge Marie avait eu besoin d'une rédemption *libératrice, erceptiva*, l'assertion fut condamnée comme *hérétique* et in-

jurieuse à la très sainte vierge Marie. L'autre jugement, porté en 1560, concernait la doctrine soutenue dans les propositions 72 et 73 de Baius, doctrine énoncée comme il suit dans le texte sorbonnique: 'Nemo, praeter Christum, est absque peccato originali, hinc beata Virgo mortua est propter peccatum ex Adam contractum, omnesque ejus afflictiones in hac vita, sicut et aliorum justorum, fuerunt ultiones peccati actualis vel originalis. Unde et Job passus est, et martyres, propter peccata sua!' Cette proposition fut déclarée *hérétique en toutes ses parties* et injurieuse envers la bienheureuse vierge Marie et les saints. On voit, pas ces censures, que L'UNIVERSITÉ DE PARIS TENAIT ET IMPOSAIT COMME VÉRITÉ DE FOI LA DOCTRINE DE L'IMMACULÉE CONCEPTION."

Speaking of the other universities who followed the example of La Sorbonne, Le Bachelet says: "Les universités de Cologne et de Mayence suivirent en 1499 et en 1500, l'exemple donné par la Sorbonne: elles inscrivirent dans leur statuts l'obligation, pour tous leur membres, de tenir la doctrine de l'immaculée conception. D'autres universités prirent ensuite la même mesure: Vienne en 1501 et de nouveau en 1649, sur la demande de l'empereur Ferdinand III; Ingolstadt, 1653; Tyrnau 1656; Salzbourg 1697. En Pologne, Cracovie établit aussi le serment."—In Spain Valencia is the first university to introduce the oath: "L'initiative vint de Valence en 1530.—Barcelone et Osuna suivirent à des dates non fixées. À un moment donné les universités rivalisent de zèle pour établir le serment: en 1617 Grenade, Alcala, Bacza, Santiago, Tolède, Saragosse; en 1618 Salamanque; en 1619 Huesca; d'autres ensuite. Même mesure fut prise en Portugal, à Coïmbre et à Evora; puis, en dehors de la péninsule ibérique, dans des régions soumises à l'influence espagnole:

à Naples, 1612, et à Palerme; dans les Flandres, à Douai, 1662. L'énumération est loint d'être complète." Vide Aug. de Roskovány, vol. I, p. 128 sq.; vol. IX, p. 720 sq.; Mgr. Péchenard, L'immaculée conception et l'ancienne université de Paris, p. 386 sq. H. Lesêtre, L'immaculée conception et l'Église de Paris, p. 82 sq.—Le Bachelet refers also to Anthony Benito: "Dès 1507 Antoine Benito nomme dans son *Elucidarius* comme acquises à la pieuse croyance, les universités de Paris, d'Oxford, de Cambridge, de Toulouse, de Bologne: Nec non universitates Parisiensis, Oxoniensis, Cantabrigensis ac Tolosana, et plures aliae idem firmiter asserentes, nobiscum, sicut Bononiensis. Cette adhésion se confirme et se manifeste par des actes éclatants, dont le principal est l'imposition du serment dit 'de l'immaculée conception'."

It is the great merit of the Sorbonne to have led all these universities to sure victory over stubborn error and malicious opposition, so far as they followed the example of the Parisian Faculty in enforcing the oath and the right teaching of the immaculate conception. In its glorious fight the Sorbonne has been supported by the zeal of the French archbishops and bishops and nearly all the clergy of the Eldest Daughter of the Church; and the laity, tenderly devoted to the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, helped to build up a multitude of congregations of the Immaculate Conception, nearly all of them created during the XV, XVI and XVII centuries. In Paris the most prominent was the *Congrégation de l'Immaculée Conception de la très sainte Marie Mère de Dieu et de saint Louis roi de France,* founded in 1659 by Charles de Saint-Germain.—Confraternities of the Immaculate Conception were created all over France, especially in Lorraine, where

the smallest village wanted to have its special cult to the Immaculate Conception. Cf. Guillaume, Histoire du culte de la très sainte Vierge en Lorraine.

St. Pierre Fourrier who was appointed parish priest of Mattaincourt in 1597, has done more than any other for the propagation of the devotion to the Immaculate Conception. In 1631 he received from the Bishop of Toul the approbation of his confraternity of the Immaculate Conception. He created the *"Congrégation des filles séculières"* with a special devotion to the Immaculate Conception. This work was to last: "Aujourd'hui encore," says Le Bachelet, "dans presque toutes les paroisses, les congrégations de filles ont pour patronne l'Immaculée Conception, dont elles célèbrent la fête très solennellement." Other members of the French clergy, backed by the Sorbonne, gave the teaching and cult every possible liturgical basis by editing missals and prayer-books in which the Immaculate Conception was extolled in a very expressive way, as "Sancta Virgo ab aeterno electa," Sancta Virgo praeservata etc. (Office de la Vierge Marie, à l'usage de l'Église catholique, apostolique et romaine, Paris 1586. L'Office de la sainte et immaculée conception de la glorieuse Vierge Marie, Paris, 1663, etc.) Finally we must mention the French catechisms which were published by the leading bishops of France. In 1619 appears at Avignon the "Instruction du chrétien." In Section XXIV of this catechism *Richelieu,* bishop of Luçon, explains gratia plena:—*"pour n'avoir jamais eu aucune tache de quelque péché que ce soit. Privilège accordé à elle seule avec grande raison, puisque seule elle est mère de notre rédempteur, qui détruit le péché."* —The archbishop of Paris, Hardouin de Péréfixe, published the "Instructions en forme de catéchisme, pour toutes les

fêtes et solennités paroissiales" which form the Fourth Part of the Catechism printed in 1665. He inserted a chapter on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady, explaining that she was *"immaculée, parce qu'elle seule d'entre les pures créatures a esté conceue sans péché originel."*— Bossuet, whom Le Bachelet ranks among the prominent defenders of the teaching of the Immaculate Conception, inserted, as bishop, a lesson on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in his *Catéchisme de Meaux,* printed in 1690, cf. Bossuet, Oeuvres, édit. Lachat, v. 5., p. 183.—Le Bachelet says: "Il inséra une leçon sur la fête de la Conception dans son *Catéchisme de Meaux.* On y lit, *d'après l'enseignement commun des théologiens,* que par une grâce particulière Marie a *été immaculée, c'est à dire sans aucune tache et sans le péché originel.* Enseignement dont la raison est qu'ils *trouvent peu convenable à la majesté de Jésus Christ que sa sainte mère ait pu être un seul moment sous la puissance de Satan.* Jésus Christ ne laisse pas, pour cela, d'être son Sauveur, *en la préservant du mal commun du genre humain, et en prévenant par sa grãce la contagion du péché d'Adam."*— Bossuet delivered five great sermons on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, 1652, 1656, 1665, 1668 and 1669. cf. Bossuet, Oeuvres oratoires, édition Lebarq. Paris, 1890 sq. vol. I, p. 228; vol. II, p. 238; vol. IV, p. 589; vol. V, p. 385, 606. "Les deux premiers sermons contiennent toute sa doctrine." Bossuet, is less a theological teacher than a defender of the Immaculate Conception; he attacks and answers the objections of the adversaries: "Il s'en prend directement aux objections, imitant en cela Duns Scot, et il se trouve que, chez lui comme chez le modèle, les réponses

données mettent en relief les hautes convenances du privilège."

For the great orator, the principal reason for this great privilege is the Divine Maternity. Le Bachelet says: "L'orateur fait comprendre que la raison dernière du glorieux privilège, comme de tous les autres, c'est la maternité divine: Marie, mère de Jésus, fut immaculée dans sa conception, et elle devait l'être, parce que mère de Jésus."—We could not better close this chapter on France and its learned promoters of the cause of the Immaculate Conception, than by quoting le *Martyrologe gallican de 1637* which announces the feast as follows: *La conception de la très sainte vierge Marie,* qui, choisie et prédestinée par Dieu dès l'eternité pour être la digne mère de son fils unique, qu'il a donné au monde pour le racheter, ornée de dons et de privilèges innombrables, au-dessus de toutes les créatures, de sorte que rien ne lui manquât en perfection, en dignité et en gloire, a été prévenue dans sa génération même par la grãce divine afin qu'aucune souillure ne l'atteignît . . ." (Le Bachelet, op. cit. vol. *VII,* col. 1140.)

FRANCE

III

Louis XIV and the Immaculate Conception

Louis XIV, as devoted to the Blessed Virgin as his father, Louis XIII, propagated especially the devotion to the Immaculate Conception. The Feast of the Immaculate Conception having ceased to be a day of obligation in France (Pope Urban VIII had taken it off the list of days on which it was prohibited to work), Louis XIV obtained in 1657, of Pope Alexander VII, a bull, which Clement XI confirmed in 1688, making it again a feast of obligation, cf. H. Chérot, *Louis XIV et l'immaculée conception en 1657,* in *Études,* Paris, 1904, vol. XCVIII, p. 803, and Bachelet, Dict. de Théologie catholique, vol. VII, col. 1135-1136.—Abbé Orsini in his History of the Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary—translated by F. C. Husenbeth, New York, 1861, writes, p. 308: Louis XIV would himself receive Confirmation on the day of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. This fact is attested by the following inscription in the chapel of the Louvre:—

Hac Sacra Die Immaculatae Conceptionis
Ludovicus XIV, Rex,
Suscepit Hic Sanctiss. Confirmationis Sacramentum.

Underneath was this inscription:

Immaculata Domina, Salvum Fac Regem.

ITALY

Conceptio sanctae Mariae Virginis.
The calendar of marble and other testimonies of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

According to X. Le Bachelet (Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, vol. VII, col. 987), *Naples* gives us the first *certain* document on the celebration of the Feast of the immaculate conception in the West:

"Naples nous fournit un premier document certain. Dans un *calendrier liturgique, gravé sur marbre,* on lit cette inscription au 9 décembre: Conceptio sanctae Mariae Virginis. La date serait à placer entre les années 840 et 850, d'après l'éditeur, A. S. Mazzocchi, *Vetus marmoreum Neapolitanae ecclesiae kalendarium,* Naples, 1744. À cette époque, l'Italie méridionnale dépendait encore de l'empire grec; nous sommes donc là en face d'une importation byzantine, ce qui confirme la date du 9 décembre, au lieu du 8 dans notre fête latine. Remarquons seulement *qu'à Naples le titre de la fête exprime directement la conception de Marie ou conception passive,* et non pas, comme à Constantinople, la conception de Sainte Anne ou conception active."

La Civiltà Cattolica, Roma 1854 vol. ottavo, p. 646, squ. says about the *Feast of the Immaculate Conception in Italy:** "Che nella *Chiesa di Napoli* si celebrasse *fin dal secolo*

* Cenni Storici intorno al Domma dell' Immacolata concezione della Madre di Dio.

ottavo la festa della Concezione, ne fa fede un antichissimo calendario scolpito in marmo, illustrato dal Mazzochi, nel quale al di *8 Dicembre,* come il descrive il dottissimo Zaccaria nel suo Onomastico Rituale, è notato: *CCEPTIO S. ANE MARIE VIR.* che vale: Concezione di S. Anna, cioè di Maria Vergine in seno a lei.

Del medesimo *ottavo secolo* è un altro rilevantissimo documento che sta pubblicando il soprallodato *P. Ballerini,* da quale si fa manifesto che nella *Chiesa di Cremona in Lombardia* la festa della Concezione di Maria si celebrava in quel tempo con solemnità non comune. Poiché nel *Cremonese il conte Uspinelli l'anno 780* edificò una capella publica in onore della Beata Vergine Maria concepita senza peccato; ed *Ugone De Summo* della medesima famiglia Uspinelli e signore dell' Oratori, *nel anno 1047* nel giorno, o come ivi è detto, *in festo Sanctae et Immaculatae Conceptionis Beatae Virginis Mariae,* donò in perpetuo beneficio della cappella una casa, con orto, campi e vigna. E fra le altri prescrizioni aggiunte nell' atto di donazione, evvi pure questa: che di legno incorruttibile o di marmo vi si rappresenti la Vergine coronata di dodice stelle, con sotto a'piedi il serpente scolpito in maniera, *che paia vomitare indarno il veleno, e la Vergine si gli prema l'empia testa, come si addice a Lei che per grazia del Figlio con anticipata redenzione fu preservata dalla macchia originale e d'anima e di corpo fu sempre integra ed immacolata.* Cosi l'autentico documento pubblicato ora per la prima volta, col quale non pure si dimostra l' antichità del culto, ma la significazione stella con che il culto dell' Immacolato concepimento della Vergine Beatissima era professato."

II

According to Passaglia either Spain or Italy first celebrated the feast of the Conception. Passaglia quotes Edmundus Martenius who writes: *"VI idus decembris* celebramus immaculatam Virginis Mariae conceptionis festivitatem, cuius prima institutio sancto Hildephonso toletano episcopo referenda videtur, nam ut legimus in eius vita seculo II. benedictino, *festum conceptionis sanctae Mariae, quo scilicet ipsa concepta est, celebrari constituit, et eius constitutione per totam Hispaniam solemniter colitur VI idus decembris.* Unde inter festa Christianorum quae a Judaeis observari praecepit rex Ervigius lib. XII. legis Wisigothorum tit. 6. recensetur *festum sanctae Virginis Mariae, quo gloriosa conceptio eiusdem genitricis Domini celebratur.* Atque hinc apparet conceptionis beatae Mariae festivitatem, ut quidam autumant, in Anglia minime incoepisse." cf. *Passaglia, De Immaculato Deiparae Semper Virginis Conceptu, ed. Romae, Typhis S. Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, MDCCCLV, Pars III, p. 1754 sq.* Passaglia quotes those who decide in favor of Toledo, and those who think that Italy was the first to celebrate the feast. He himself believes that the Italians were the first ones *"primi omnium Latinorum ante Gallos et Anglos aliosque,"* but with perfect impartiality adds: *"exceptis Hispanis, si ea sibi constent quae praemisimus."* He gives us in extenso the beautiful hymn in honor of the immaculate Virgin "Quis possit amplo famine praepotens," and thus writes about the oldest Italian testimonies of pious belief in the Immaculate

Conception: non minori pietatis (than in Spain) studio in conceptam Deiparam Italia ferebatur. Cuius studii testis inprimis est hymnus cassinensium monachorum usu frequentatus, idemque *seculo IX. vetustior.* Illum in acceptis referimus eruditis curis Ioh Baptistae Fredericü et Josephi de Coustantio, qui eumdem ex codicibus beneventanis, sublacensibus et cassinensibus ad secula XII. X. et IX. spectantibus descripserunt, et Ambrosio vel Paülo diacono tribuendum esse criticis argumentis comprobarunt. Dignus porro est qui heic integer exhibeatur:

Quis possit amplo famine praepotens
Digne fateri praemia Virginis,
Per quam veternae sub laqueo necis
Orbi retento reddita vita est?
Haec virga Iesse, Virgo puerpera
Hortus superno germine consitus,
Signatus alto munere fons sacer.
Mundum beavit viscere caelibi.
Hausto maligni primus ut occidit
Virus chelydri terrigenum parens;
Hinc lapsa pestis per genus irrepens
Cunctum profundo vulnere perculit
Rerum misertus sed sator, inscia
Cernens picauli viscera Virginis,
Hic ferre mortis crimine languido
Mandat salutis gaudia seculo.
Emissus astris Gabriel innubae
Aeterna portat nuntia Virgini:
Verbo tumescit latior aethere
Alvus replentem secula continens.

Intacta mater, virgoque fit parens,
Orbis creator ortus in orbe est,
Hostis pavendi sceptra remota sunt,
Toto refulsit lux nova seculo.
Sic virginalis vincula permanent
Prodit pudoris dum thalamo potens;
Mansere clausae arctius ut fores,
Intrante demum quos sera vinxerat.
Hoc signat aedis ianua non patens,
Quam celsa vatis visio prodidit,
Soli tremenda pervia principi,
Mansura nempe clausa perenniter.
Sit Trintitati gloria unicae,
Virtus, potestas, summa potentia,
Regnum retentans, quae Deus unus est,
Per cuncta semper secula seculi. Amen.

His porro ad cultum conceptae Deiparae ostendendum accommadatissimis, monimentum succedit neque minus illustre neque aetate multo recentius. Norunt eruditi *Kalendarium marmoreum neapolitanae ecclesiae* a Symmacho Mazzochio editum sapienterque illustratum, et ante seculum X. certissime adhibitum. In eiusmodi autem Kalendario ad diem IX. Decembris haec habentur: *conceptio sanctae Marie virginis.* Nimirum *notat* (cf Kalend. eccles. univ. T. V. pagg. 458-459) *Assemanus,* conceptio passiva Deiparae, quando in utero matris Annae concepta est; nam de conceptione eiusdem Deipara activa, quando angelo nunciante concepit de Spiritu sancto Iesum Christum Dominum nostrum, in eodem Kalendario agitur ad diem XXV. Martii. IGITUR PRIMI OMNIUM LATINORUM ANTE GALLOS ET ANGLOS ALIOSQUE (exceptis Hispanis, si ea sibi constent quae prae-

misimus) Neapolitani in Italia fuerunt conceptionis sanctissimae Deiparae a Graecis acceptae cultores. Quamobrem quum idem festum in eadem nobilissima Italiae ecclesia a latinis hominibus iam ante seculum IX. celebratum sit, atque subsequutis temporibus celebrari non desierit; miror cur nullam eiusce rei notitiam sanctus Bernardus habuerit dum canonicos lugdunenses reprehendens scribit, eos voluisse mutare colorem optimum novam inducendo celebritatem, quam ritus ecclesiasticus nescit, non probat ratio, non commendat antiqua traditio. Maxime quum hac de re satis edoceri potuisset a Normannis, qui eiectis e Sicilia Saracenis, regno utriusque Siciliae iam potiti fuerant, quo anno sanctus Bernardus scribebat. Miror etiam cur alii recentiores scriptores celebrati primum eius festi gloriam Anglis aut Gallis tribuant. Miror denique quod festo illo tamquam novo in controversiam adducto, nemo unus exstiterit qui graecanicae ecclesiae antiquissiman illius celebrandi consuetudinem adduceret. Nimirum iis temporibus orientalium ecclesiarum ritus aut prorsus ignotus, aut propter instauratum nuper a Michaele Cerulario schisma photianum nihil a sancto Bernardo, nihil à lugdunensibus canonicis habebatur.

Neapolitano kalendario placet subiicere *chartam donationis,* quam ex comitate eruditi viri Antonii Dragonii accepit Antonius Ballerinius, notisque auctam typis vulgavit. Titulus chartae sic habet: *"charta donationis factae canonicis et ecclesiae sanctae Mariae matris ab Ugone de Summo presbytero de cardine eiusdem sanctae Mariae matris."* In ipsa porro charta, quae anno *MXLVII.* exarata fuit, post alia legimus: "Volo insuper ut iam dicti venerabiles fratres mei de ordine cardinali huius sanctae Mariae matris de hac civitate Cremonae ordinent fieri intra spatium duorum annorum

ab hac ipsa festivitate computandum, unam nobilem et pulcram statuam* de ligno incorruptibili sive de marmore pro eodem Oraculo, quae repraesentet imaginem eiusdem sanctae Mariae matris nostrae coronatae duodecim stellis, in cuius ampla superveste sint sol et luna, et sub pedibus eius habente antiquum serpentem, cui in paradiso terrestri a Deo dictum est, *inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem, et semen tuum et semen illius; ipsa conteret caput tuum, et tu insidiaberis calcaneo eius.* Volo autem ut serpens ita sit sculptus, ut frustra virus inermis videatur vomere, et nequissimum eius caput sic beata Virgo forti pede conterat, uti decet illam quae gratia Filii ab originali labe anticipata redemptione praeservata semper fuit tam anima tam corpore integra et immaculata. Insuper ordino, ut omni anno in festivate immaculatae conceptionis beatae Mariae matris Dei in eodem Oraculo in missa accendatur pharum, et tota die ardeant duodecim luminaria et canatur tropus." Sequitur *tropus canendus in conceptione sancta immaculata beatae Mariae virginis matris Dei,* his verbis expressus:

Candidissima uti lilia
Salve aeterni patris filia.
Salve mater redemptoris,
Salve sponsa spiratoris.
Sine macula concepta
Salve Triadis electa.
Salve inferni victrix aspidis,
Illius expers sola cuspidis
Salve Triadis electa
Sine macula concepta.

* Monimentum cum hoc conferendum et ad annum spectans MCIV. memorat Benedictus Plazza in caussa imm. concept. act. III. a II. n. 86.

Igitur seculo XI. immaculatus Deiparae conceptus in cremonensi ecclesia ritu solemni celebratur. Sic vero celebratur, ut festum non tum primum inceperit, sed penes maiores iampridem obtinuerit. Quod enim seculo XI. primum non inceperit, ipsa ex sese chartae verba patefaciunt; quod autem iampridem obtinuerit, palam ex iis est quae Dragonius ex antiquis schedis decerpta his verbis proponit: "Inter chartas membranaceas a concive nostro Wenceslao Cavaletti possessas Mediolani, unam vidi ex qua constat comitem Uspinellum prope castrum a se possessum et iuris gentis suae ducalis in loco qui dicitur plebs octovillarum publicum oraculum construxisse ANNO DCCLXXX. in honorem beatae Mariae virginis matris Dei sine labe originali conceptae." Tum eiusdem monimenti auctoritate suffultus addit, nonnulla de immaculato Deiparae conceptu scripta referri a Stephano II. cremonensi antistite, qui ANNO DCCCXIV. e vita decessit.

In a footnote Passaglia quotes Mazzochius on the age of the marble calendar: "In diatriba de aetate huius marmorei kalendarii sic habet Mazzochius pag. XVIII: Siquidem intra unius integri seculi ambitum huius praeclari monumenti structuram concludere satis mihi esse ducerem; illud prorsus IX. seculo factum defendere, eoque IX. seculo nec antiquius nec recentius esse posse, non levibus argumentis suaderem. Nunc terminos hosce laxiores quam pro critice aetatis huius esse ratus contractiores multo habenas huic quam quaerimus epochae permittemus. Duas vero in partes hanc totam commentationem tribuemus. Quarum priore demonstrabimus, haec marmora *nec anno DCCCXVIII. antiquiora, nec DCCCLXXVII. recentiora esse posse*, ita ut eius epocha

intra annos non amplius undesexaginta vagari ultro citroque possit. Eo labore perfuncti, altera parte angustioribus decem tantum annorum finibus eamdem epocham coercere adnitemur, ita ut nec ante annum DCCCXL. nec post DCCCL. hi fasti prodiisse videantur."

SPAIN

I

A. D. 1394

Don Juan I. of Arragon, instituted by royal authority the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in the several provinces of Spain which had shaken off the yoke of Islamism. The following is the decree of the King:*—

"We, Don Juan, by the grace of God King of Arragon and Valencia, etc.—Why are some persons astonished that the Blessed Mary, Mother of God, should have been conceived without original sin, while we doubt not that St. John Baptist was sanctified in his mother's womb by that same God, who, coming from the highest heaven, and from the throne of the most Holy Trinity, was made flesh in the blessed womb of a virgin? What graces do we think the Lord could refuse to the woman who gave birth to him by the splendid prodigy of her fruitful virginity? Loving his mother as he loves her, he must have surrounded her conception, her nativity and the other phases of her life, with the most glorious privileges.

"Why call in question the conception of a virgin so privileged, and of whom the Catholic faith obliges us to believe grandeurs and wonders which we cannot sufficiently admire? Is it not a much greater subject of admiration for all Chris-

* From Abbé Orsini's Life of the Blessed Virgin, Husenbeth-translation.—Edition of 1861 by Virtue-Yorston & Co., New York.

tians to see that a creature has given birth to her Creator, and that she became a mother without ceasing to be a virgin? How then shall the human mind suffice to praise this glorious Virgin, whom the Almighty predestined to possess, without the least corruption, the advantages of the divine maternity, conjointly with the glory of the purest virginity, and to be exalted above all the prophets, all the saints, and all the choirs of angels, as their queen? Could there then have been wanting any purity and any grace to that excellent Virgin in the first moment of her conception, so that the stain of original sin might have been imputed to her—her to whom the angel of the Lord sent from heaven spoke these words, "Hail Mary, full of grace! the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women!" Let then those who have nothing but vain and frivolous arguments to propose against the immaculate conception, so privileged and so pure, of the Blessed Virgin, be ashamed to publish them, because it was fitting that she should be endowed with so great purity, that next to that of God, none like it could be imagined. It is indeed fitting that she who had for her Son the Creator and Father of all things should have been, and should be ever, most pure and most perfect, having from the beginning and before all ages, by an eternal decree of God, been chosen among all creatures to contain in her womb Him whom the whole world and the whole immensity of heavens cannot contain.

"But we, who among all Catholic kings have received from this Mother of Mercies so many graces and benefits without having deserved them, we firmly believe that the Conception of this Blessed Virgin, in whose womb the Son of God vouchsafed to be made man, was entirely holy and immaculate.

"Thus we honor with a pure heart the mystery of this immaculate and blessed conception of the most holy Virgin, Mother of God: and we, and all those of the royal family, celebrate the festival of it every year with solemnity, in the same manner as our most illustrious predecessors of glorious memory have celebrated it, having had established for it a perpetual confraternity. Wherefore we ordain that this Feast of the Immaculate Conception shall be celebrated annually for ever, with great solemnity and respect, in all the kingdoms of our obedience, by all the Catholic faithful, whether religious or secular, priests or others, or whatever state or condition they may be, and that henceforth it shall not be lawful, and we even forbid all preachers, and all those who publicly lecture on the gospel, to say anything, to publish and advance anything, which in any way whatever might prejudice or be injurious to the purity and sanctity of this blessed conception; but, on the contrary, we ordain that preachers and other persons who have had opposite opinions shall keep strict silence, since the Catholic faith does not place us in any necessity of maintaining and professing the contrary opinion; and that others who hold our holy and salutary opinion in their heart shall publish it in their discourses, and eagerly testify their devotion by celebrating, by the praises of the Most High, the glory and honor of his holy Mother, who is the Queen of heaven, the gate of Paradise; she who has care of our souls, the secure haven of salvation, and the anchor of hope of all sinners who have confidence in her. By the tenor of these presents we expressly establish, in perpetuity, that if it happens in future that any preacher, or any other person among our subjects, of what state or condition soever he may be, does not observe this ordinance, without any neces-

sity for any other decree from us, let him be banished from his convent or house; and while he remains in this contrary opinion, let him depart as our enemy from the whole extent of our kingdoms. Willing also and ordering, of our knowledge and mature deliberation, under pain of incurring our anger and indignation, all and each of our officers who are on this side and beyond the sea, those who are there now, and who shall be there hereafter, to keep and cause to be kept with great diligence and respect our present edict, as soon as they shall have cognizance thereof; and that each, in his district, shall cause it to be published correctly, solemnly, and with sound of trumpet in all the usual places, so that no one may plead ignorance of it; and that the devotion of the immaculate conception of the most blessed Virgin, which Christians have long cherished in their hearts, may more and more increase, and that those people of an opposite opinion may no more in future be heard to open their mouths. In testimony of which we command these presents to be expedited, authorized by our seal, which is attached to them.

"Given at Valentia, on the 2nd of February, the day on which we celebrate the Feast of the Purification of this most holy Virgin, in the year of Our Lord 1394, and the eighth of our reign."

DON JUAN I.

SPAIN

II

A. D. 1771

In 1771, the King of Spain, Charles III, instituted an order in honor of the Virgin conceived without sin, and solemnly declared her, with the concurrence of the Cortes, and a brief from the Holy See, "Universal Patrona de Espana è Indias." "Por la devocion que desde nuestra infancia hemos tenido à Maria santisima en su misterio de la inmaculada concepcion, deseamos poner bajo los divinos auspicios de esta celestial protectora la . . . Nueva Orden, y mandamos que sea reconocida en elle por patrona. . . ."

The Spanish nation, which has always particularly signalized itself in the devotion to the Immaculate Conception, has so thoroughly adopted it that not a single preacher mounts the pulpit without prefacing his sermon with a profession of faith in the conception without stain: "Alabado sea el santisimo Sacramento del altar, y la inmaculada concepcion de la Virgen Maria, concebida sin pecado original en el primer instante de su ser natural."—In going into a Spanish house, the first words which visitors pronounce, before they wish "Good day," are these, "Ave Maria purisima"; the masters of the house immediately answer, "Sin pecado concebida, santisima."

Abbé Orsini, Life of the Blessed Virgin;

N. B. "The foregoing chapter was written by the author before the ever memorable 8th of December, 1854.—F. C. Husenbeth, D. D.

AUSTRIA

"In the year 1629, the emperor of Austria, Ferdinand III, seeing himself threatened by the Swedes, inflated by their successes and their conquests, had recourse to the protection of the Blessed Virgin. He caused to be erected in the great square of Vienna a magnificent column, adorned with emblems which are so many figures of the *Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God.* At each of the four corners of the pedestal was seen an angel, armed, and trampling a monster under his feet, symbolical of the victory which Mary obtained over original sin. On the top of the column rose the statue of the Blessed Virgin, crushing with her foot the infernal serpent; below we read this inscription, in Latin: "To God, most good and most great, sovereign emperor of heaven and earth, by whom Kings reign: to *the Virgin Mother of God conceived without the stain of original sin, and by whom princes command,*—chosen this day, by a special devotion, to be the *patroness of Austria,*—Ferdinand, third emperor of that name, intrusts, devotes, and consecrates to her all that he possesses, his person, his children, his peoples, his armies, his provinces, and in perpetual memory of that devotion he has erected this statue to her." Never was seen a more solemn festival than the benediction of that superb monument; it was truly the triumph of the Immaculate Conception of Mary."

(d'Arville, The Year of Mary, page 435, New York, Kennedy & Sons, 1865.)

ANGLO-SAXON DEVOTION TO THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

A manuscript now in the University Library at Cambridge, called *The Book of Cerne,* and which belonged to *Ethelwold, Bishop of Sherbourne in 760,* contains the following prayer to the Blessed Virgin, a clear monument both of the faith and devotion of the Anglo-Saxons in the time of *Venerable Bede:*

"Holy Mother of God, Virgin ever blest, glorious and noble, chaste and inviolate, O Mary Immaculate, chosen and beloved of God, endowed with singular sanctity, worthy of all praise, thou who art the advocate for the sins (peril) of the whole world; O listen, listen, listen to us, O holy Mary. Pray for us, intercede for us, disdain not to help us. For we are confident and know for certain that thou canst obtain all thou willest from thy Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, God Almighty, the King of Ages, who liveth with the Father and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen."

* Taken from T. E. Bridgett's "Our Lady's Dowry," which gives also part of the Latin text of this prayer as published in Home and Foreign Review, October 1862:

Sancta Dei genitrix, semper Virgo beata, benedicta, gloriosa, et generosa, intacta et intemerata, casta et incontaminata, Maria immaculata, electa et a Deo dilecta, singulari sanctitate praedita, atque omni laude digna, quae est interpellatrix pro totius mundi discrimine, exaudi, exaudi, exaudi nos, sancta Maria.

THE SCOTCH CHURCH*

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was taught in the following explicit manner in the Catechism published in 1548 by the authority of Archbishop Hamilton:

"The fruit of the glorious Virgin was allanerly blessit efter so excellent a manner, that nother he was borne nor consavit in syn; but also it was impossibil y^{t} he mycht be consavit and borne in syn, because he is baith God and man. He blessit the conceptioun of his mother the Virgin Marie, quhen he preservit hir fra original syn."

* From Rev. T. E. Bridgett's "Our Lady's Dowry," p. 38.

INTERIOR OF CRYPT

National Shrine of Immaculate Conception, Washington, D. C.

IRELAND

There is much research work still to be done by those who are anxious to throw more light on the assertion that the Feast of the Immaculate Conception was celebrated in Ireland somehow and somewhere as early as the beginning of the ninth century, and most likely already during the eighth. Herbert Thurston, who by his article *"The Irish origins of our Lady's Conception Feast,"* written for the fiftieth anniversary of the definition of the dogma,* started the scholarly campaign in favor of Ireland, hopes that new proofs will be found, while the learned French authority on this matter, Le Bachelet, holds that the three authentic and important documents which have been discovered recently ** prove at least that the thought of a feast or of a commemoration of the conception of Mary existed in certain Irish circles already during the ninth and tenth centuries. We quote first *Le Bachelet's* important remarks on the Irish origins of the Feast: "Trois documents ont été récemment publiés ou mis en lumière, dont l'importance est d'autant plus grande que la mention de la fête de la conception n'apparaît pas ailleurs avant l'an 1000; elle ne se trouve, par example, ni dans le calendrier de saint Willibrord (†739), Paris, Bibliothèque

* Published in The Month, London, vol. ciii, May 1904.

** The martyrology of Tallaght (IX. or X. century), the metrical calendar-manuscript which was written after the death of King Alfred and shows clearly its dependance from an Irish prototype (beginning of Xth century or earlier), and the calendar of the Irish monk Oengus (apparently beginning of IX. century).

nationale, ms. latin 10837, ni dans le Bénédictional de saint Ethelwold († 984), publié dans Archaeologia, Londres, 1832, vol. XXIV, ni, semble-t-il, dans l'important calendrier de la bibliothèque de Trinity College à Dublin, dont parle le P. Thurston. (The Irish orgins of our Lady's Conception feast, p. 457, note 3.)

A. Martyrologe de Tallaght, du IX^e^ ou X^e^ siècle. Mention avait été faite de cette pièce dans les Acta sanctorum, maii T. I. Anvers 1680, p. 361, parmi les Praetermissi du troisième jour : Mariae Virginis Conceptio celebratur in Martyrologio Tamlactensi. La reproduction du texte a confirmé cette indication ; on y lit, au mois de mai, v nonas, c'est à dire le troisième jour :

Crucis Christi Inventio.
Mariae Virginis Conceptio.
Eventii, Teodoli, Ambrosii, etc.

Book of Leinster, édit. Rob. Atkinson, Dublin 1880, p. 360 ; pour la date, H. Thurston, Eadmeri tractatus de conceptione sanctae Mariae, p. XXXIII.

B. Un calendrier manuscript versifié, dont l'exemplaire le plus ancien aurait été composé après la mort du roi Alfred, entre 901 et 940. Cet exemplaire dépend lui-même d'un prototype irlandais qui doit, par conséquent, remonter au moins au début du dixième siècle. Cette inscription s'y trouve, au sixième des nones, deuxième jour de mai :

Concipitur virgo Maria cognomine senis.

Londres, British Mus., ms. Cotton., Galba, A. XVIII. Cf. Thurston, art. cit. p. 451, 455 ; Eadmeri tractatus, p. XXXII.

C. Calendrier d'Oengus, moine irlandais qui vécut quelque

temps dans le monastère de Tallaght. Cette pièce semble remonter jusqu'à la naissance du IX^e^ siècle; elle porte au 3 mai, cette annonce:

Feil mar Maire uage.
(La grande fête de la Vierge Marie.)

La note suivante se lit en marge du texte irlandais dans le manuscript Lebar Brece.

Feil mar muire, et reliqua, id est, haec inceptio eius, ut alii putant—sed in februo mense vel in martio facta est illa quia post VII menses nata est, ut inarratur—vel quaelibet alia feria eius.

La grande fête de Marie, et le reste, c'est à dire sa première origine, suivant les uns—mais elle a eu lieu au mois de février ou de mars, puisque Marie est née après sept mois, comme il est rapporté—ou quelque autre de ses fêtes.

The transactions of the Royal Irish Academy. Irish manuscript series, vol. I, part 1. Calendar of Oengus, by Dr. Whitley Stokes, p. LXXVIII, LXXXIV; Cf. Thurston, art. cit. p. 455 sq.; Eadmeri tractatus, p. XXXIII.

Mais s'agit-il, dans les trois calendriers, d'une fête reéllement célébrée en Irlande à l'époque où ils furent composés?—À tout le moins, les documents eux-mêmes *prouvent* que l'idée d'une fête ou d'une commémoraison ayant pour objet la conception de Marie existait dans certains milieux irlandais au IX^e^ et X^e^ siècles. En revanche, ils ne nous donnent aucun renseignement précis sur la manière dont on comprenait l'objet de la fête ou de la commémoraison, à savoir dans le sens plus large d'une conception simplement miraculeuse ou dans le sens plus strict d'une conception sainte. Mais il serait

arbitraire d'exclure *a priori* le second sens, quand vers la même époque, on trouve dans une hymne sur la bienheureuse Vierge la strophe qui suit, où la mère de Dieu, nouvelle Éve, est mise à part des autres humains dans ses prérogatives, dans son rôle et peut-être dans son origine.

Huic matri nec inventa ante nec post similis,
Nec de prole fuit plane humanae originis.
Per mulierem et lignum mundus periit,
Per mulieris virtutem ad salutem rediit.

A. Blume, Analecta hymnica medii aevi, t. LI. Die Hymnen des 5-11 Iahrh. und die Irish-Keltischen Hymnodien, p. 305.

Herbert Thurston maintains, that it was in England that the commemoration of Our Lady's Conception first assumed a practical shape in any Western liturgy, further that in England the apocryphal elements (apocryphal story of St. Anne and St. Joachim), though prominent at first, were eventually laid aside, and that before the festival extended to other countries, it was practically identified with that privilege of exemption from original sin which the Church now honors under the title of our Lady's Immaculate Conception. He says: "No one, we think, who fairly examines the evidence adduced by Mr. Edmund Bishop in the *Downside Review* for 1886, can feel any doubt that the feast as we know it took its rise upon English soil. His conclusions have been accepted without dispute by the most competent of continental scholars." Herbert Thurston refers in this respect to the article of M. l'abbé Vacandard, the author of the Life of St. Bernard, in the *Revue des Questions historiques*, January 1897, entitled "Les Origines de la fête de la conception dans le diocèse de Rouen et en Angleterre; to Le Bachelet, *L'Immaculée Conception*

(1903), Part II. p. 20; and to Dom B. Wolff *in Studien und Mittcilungen* 1886, ii, p. 108.

But the Anglo-Saxon calendars and benedictionals to which Mr. Bishop appeals are none of them of older date than the year 1025 or thereabouts. "There is," says Thurston, "some tolerably strong negative evidence which seems to render it unlikely that the age of St. Ethelwold of Winchester, who died in 984, can be credited with the introduction of the new feast. If the feast is found in some Winchester calendars and benedictionals of the eleventh century, it is equally conspicuous by its absence in other Winchester books of very slightly older date. The Missal known as that of Robert of Jumièges contains the feast of St. Ethelwold himself, but not that of our Lady's Conception. Similarly the Conception feast is not mentioned in the Benedictional of Archbishop Robert or in that of St. Ethelwold, and there is no reference to it in the Winchester Troper. Most of these books are about the year 1000, and might be expected to take notice of the innovation if it had been introduced at an earlier period than the beginning of the eleventh century, for Mr. Bishop maintains with some confidence that the influences which mainly helped to propagate the new feast must be traced either to the New Minster or the Old Minster of the cathedral city of St. Ethelwold. But there is one codex containing an allusion to the Conception of the Blessed Virgin which is distinctly earlier than any of those we have mentioned. It has been commonly supposed that the book belonged to King Athelstan (†940), and the chief librarian of the British Museum, while stating that no adequate evidence for this assumption is now known to us, admits that there is no intrinsic reason why the attribution should not be correct. To judge by the penmanship THE

METRICAL CALENDAR which forms the first portion of this manuscript belongs to the earlier half of the tenth century. Cf. Cotton, Galba, A. XVIII. Other copies of the same calendar are found in M. S. Julius, A. VI; and Tiberius, B. V. The *latest entry* which it contains is a mention of the death of King Alfred (901), on October 26th, in the following form: *Alfred rex obiit septenis et quoque Amandus.* King Alfred died on the seventh (day before the calends) and Amandus also.

From the fact that in this and many other instances another early copy of the calendar exhibits a different name in place of the Saxon commemoration, the name being in every case that of an older and less local saint, it seems highly probable that these Saxon commemorations are themselves substitutions replacing an older original. In the present case (in M. S. Julius, A. VI.) we find instead of Alfred: *Maximianus obit septenis et quoque Amandus,* and this we may take to be the primitive reading of the line, although the Hieronymian Martyrology gives us no Maximianus for this day, but only Marianus. No one who knows the transformations to which such names are subject will find any difficulty in believing that the compiler of the metrical calendar found Maximianus in the text before him. In any case the fact remains that one of the three known copies of the document exhibits here, as in many other places, what is in all probability an older reading than the Anglo-Saxon reference to King Alfred, and that THIS OLDER READING VERY PROBABLY BELONGS TO THE NINTH CENTURY OR EVEN TO THE CENTURY BEFORE IT. But the important point for our present inquiry is that here in this metrical calendar, which may thus be reasonably referred to the time of Alfred the Great, we meet THE

FIRST TRACES OF A COMMEMORATION OF OUR LADY'S CONCEPTION. It is not indeed given under the 8th or 9th December, but at a quite different period of the year. Nonetheless the record itself offers no ambiguity. Opposite the second day of May, or according to the Roman manner of reckoning, the sixth day before the Ides of May, we find the following entry:

Concipitur virgo Maria cognomine scnis.

On the sixth (before the Ides) the Virgin who
bears the name of Mary is conceived.

This line is found in all the three extant copies of the calendar, the only variation being that in M. L. Julius, A. *VI. commine* instead of cognomine, a change which merely adds to the difficulties of the scansion."—Thurston, coming finally to the essential point—the Irish origin—says: "It did not need a very extended examination of the text or a very profound acquaintance with Celtic hagiography to suggest that over and above the indications of its Anglo-Saxon provenance the calendar exhibited THE MOST UNMISTAKABLE SIGNS OF THE INFLUENCE OF AN IRISH PROTOTYPE."

We do not quote the linguistic proofs which Thurston brings forth, as they are convincing only for specialists, but we mention the persuasive fact, Thurston refers to, that in a letter to *The Academy,* June 29th 1895, Dr. Whitley Stokes, whom Thurston calls "one of the most famous Celtic specialists of our times," comes to the conclusion that the metric calendar—manuscript "WAS WRITTEN BY AN IRISHMAN IN THE NINTH CENTURY OR THEREABOUTS."

Dr. Stokes in a detailed examination points out to the ten

most distinctively Irish entries of the manuscript. "The large numbers of commemorations of Irish saints, and the accuracy with which the names are spelt, point to an Irish origin."—"But supposing," says Thurston, it will be objected, the Irish origin of the calendar in Galba, A. *XVIII*, to be fully proved, we cannot assume, without further evidence, that this particular feature of the commemoration of our Lady's Conception on the 2nd of May is derived from Irish sources." Thurston recognizes the force of this objection, but he points to the fact that the three metrical calendars of the British Museum are not alone in their mention of the feast: "There *are* certain fragments of confirmatory evidence, and these appear just where we might expect to find them, i.e. among entries of the earliest Irish calendars preserved to us. In the versified menology called the CALENDAR OF OENGUS, which Dr. Whitley Stokes, from linguistic and other considerations, considers to have been compiled in the second half of the tenth century, we meet not indeed upon the 2nd, but upon the 3rd of May, the following entry:

Feil mar Maire uage.

The great feast of Mary the Virgin.

This entry does not stand first among the items assigned to that date. As our readers will hardly need to be told, May 3rd is the festival of the "invention" of the Cross, and accordingly we find in the calendar of Oengus, that the first place is assigned to.

The first finding of the wood of
Christ's cross with many virtues.

But what is still more interesting, in the lower margin of

the "LEBAR BRECE," one of the most important extant manuscripts of Oengus, we find the following Latin note:

Feil mar muire et reliqua, i.e., haec inceptio eius, ut alii putant—sed in februo mense vel in martio facta est illa, quia post vii menses nata est, ut innarratur—vel quaelibet alia feria eius.

"Mary's great feast," etc. That is to say, this, as some think, is the day of her conception—but that event took place rather in the month of February or March, because it is related that she was a seven months' child –or else any other feast of hers.

The reader cannot fail to observe that the author of this gloss—*which is notably later than the Irish text of the martyrology*—was evidently familiar with some tradition connecting our Lady's Conception with this date.—The important point, however, is that the Irish text of Oengus gives no hint of the nature of the commemoration. He simply mentions on May 3rd "Mary's great feast." The annotator must consequently have his idea that this was her conception from some independent source. There is nothing in the period of four months and five days, which intervenes between May 3rd and September 8th to suggest anything of the kind." Thurston is most careful about a fourth testimony: "Whether we possess a fourth testimony to the existence of the Irish Conception-feast, distinct from the group of metrical calendars, the martyrology of Oengus and the annotator of the same, does not seem quite certain. But in any case, a casual notice found among the *Praetermissi* of the Bollandist *Acta Sanctorum*, on May 3rd, deserves careful attention. It runs thus:

Mariae Virginis Conceptio celebratur in
Martyrologio Tamlactensi.

The Conception of the Virgin Mary is commemorated (on this day) in the Martyrologium of Tallaght.

It might perhaps have been supposed that the Bollandists were confusing the *Félire of Oengus* with the Martyrologium of Tallaght; for Oengus the Culdee, to whom the Félire is traditionally ascribed, is believed to have joined the community of Tamlacht (Tallaght). But the two works are entirely distinct, and though unfortunately the Martyrology of Tallaght has never been adequately edited, the facsimile reproduction of the famous *Book of Leinster* has established beyond doubt the accurancy of the Bollandist statement. The Martyrology of Tallaght is said by the later martyrologist Gorman to have been the source from which Oengus derived the materials for his *Félire*. Its composition, as Colgan has pointed out, may with some confidence be assigned to about the year 900. Be this as it may, on p. 360 of the *Book of Leinster* facsimile, we find the following entry:

V Nonas (Maias)
Crucis Christi Inventio
Mariae Virginis Conceptio.

Eventii, Teodoli, Ambrosii,
Rufinae Muscae, Saturnini, etc.

This entry speaks for itself, though it is but natural to conjecture that the Martyrology of Tallaght may conceivably have suggested the note left us by the annotator of Oengus.—

The evidence, imperfect as it is, seems nevertheless sufficient to show that in the Irish Church of the tenth and probably of the ninth century, the conception of our Blessed Lady was in some way commemorated, not indeed on the 8th of December, but at the beginning of May.—Thurston conjectures, "that some learned Culdee of the ninth century, finding in a Coptic Calendar the mention of Mary's Nativity at the beginning of the month which corresponds to May, and being himself accustomed to keep the feast on September 8th, like the rest of Western Christendom, supposed that this earlier Nativity feast must be that of her "Inceptio", or first beginning, i.e., conception; *inceptio* is the very word, it will be remembered, which is used by the annotator of Oengus. And this suggestion would only be confirmed by the possible though doubtful occurrence of the names of Ioachim and Anne in the immediate vicinity. In any case, if we are studying the origin of our Lady's Conception feast, not so much as a dogma, but rather as a liturgical celebration, it is impossible to ignore the very important part played by the apocryphal gospel of St. James, the so-called "Protoevangelium" together with its derivatives, the pseudo—Matthew, and the gospel of the Nativity of Mary.—The feast of the Conception of Mary in the East was at first not so much regarded as a commemoration of our Lady's special privilege, as a joyful festival in honor of her parents Ioachim and Anne.—The very similarity of the story of Ioachim and Anne told in the apocryphal Protoevangelium, with that of Zacharias and Elizabeth as we read it in the Gospel of St. Luke, was bound to suggest the question propounded some centuries later by Osbert of Clare: "Why should the conception of the servant

be honored and the conception of her who was the Mother of the Lord be passed over in silence?" So far as we know, the first writers in the West who responded to the logic of this appeal were the Irish hagiographers of the ninth and tenth centuries. But their answer seems to have gone no further than an entry in their calendar which introduced no new feature into the liturgy. Still the claim to priority was theirs, and these calendars, which spread probably through Scottish and Northumbrian channels, made their way into England propagating the new idea. Thus, when in the eleventh century the question of honoring the Conception of the Blessed Virgin was suggested a second time, the reply took a more practical shape, and another day was pitched upon which corresponded better to the celebration of our Lady's Nativity, already universally honored on the 8th of September. But even then, the thought of Mary's privilege of immunity from sin was not as yet welded with the commemoration of her conception. It was the historic fact, and the marvels which attended it, to which attention was still drawn, just as the vision of Zacharias formed the principal *raison d'être* of the Conception feast of the Baptist. We have only to glance at the pre-Norman forms of Benediction *in Conceptione B. Mariae Virg.* to appreciate the truth of this remark. Notice for instance, the blessing preserved in Ad. MS. 28, 188, which Mr. Bishop takes to be a Winchester Pontifical written for Bishop Leofric of Exeter:

The Blessing upon the feast of the Conception of Holy Mary:

May the everlasting blessing of God be granted to you at the prayer of Blessed Mary, the Virgin, whom the Father

Almighty, seeing that His Only Begotten Son should be born from her, proclaimed by an angelic messenger when she was about to be conceived, and may ye, as she is most bountiful, experience her helpful bounty for ever bestowed upon you. Amen.

May He also who before her conception marked her out by name through the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, vouchsafe that you may in your heart become pregnant with divine grace in the confession of the Holy Trinity, and may He protect you from all evil and confirm you in that sanctification which makes you like to God.

Another similar Pontifical Benediction is to be found in Harleian, 2892. It alludes to the Blessed Mother of God *quam angelico concipiendam preconavit oraculo* "whose conception He announced by an angel herald" and refers to her again as one *"quam prius sanctificavit nominis dignitate quam edita gigneretur humana fragilitate"* whom He santified by the dignity of her name, before she was born of human frailty."

So again in the Leofric missal the collect for this day speaks of the "Conception of Blessed Mary being announced to her parents by the prophetic word of an angel," and there is nothing which draws attention to her privilege of exemption from original sin.—But finally, after the Norman Conquest, in the discussion carried on by Abbot Anselm of Bury St. Edmond, and by Osbert of Clare, we find that the celebration of Mary's Conception is closely identified with the dogma of her sinlessness." Thurston then quotes the appeal of "the first English apostle of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, Osbert of Clare, who was also the great promoter of this feast.

"For if (he says) the blessed John, whom God sent to go before His son, was only conceived after an angel envoy had announced his coming, and was sanctified in the womb of his mother, much rather must we believe that she from whose body the Holy of holies was ushered into the world, being there made flesh and coming forth like a bridegroom from his chamber, was herself hallowed in the moment of her conception. For if the begetting of the servant is commemorated, what ought to be done for the begetting of the Mother of the Lord? And if the spirit of God purified and illuminated St. John at the moment when, as Elizabeth bore witness, to greet the coming of his Saviour he leaped for joy in her womb, we cannot surely doubt that this temple of the wisdom of God (domus sapientiae dei), as she took form within her mother's flesh, was wholly filled with the grace of the Holy Ghost, being on fire with the flame of love, radiant with the white robe of all virtues, and purified even as regards her body from every kind of defilement." (Letter of Osbert of Clare in M.S. Cotton, Vitellius A. 17, fol. 25.

Herbert Thurston is continuing his research work. We quote here one of his footnotes of the foregoing article, to show that there remains some work to be done:

"There may be other traces of this Irish Conception feast, which will some day come to light. The calendar of Cashel, frequently referred to by Colgan, and assigned by him to the year 1030, seems to have now disappeared, but may be recovered. St. Willibrord's Calendar in the Epternach Hieornymianum (Paris, Lat. 10, 837), or the Codex Augiensis CLXVII, at Carlsruhe, might furnish another mention of the feast, but we have been unable to consult them. The

valuable calendar in the library of Trinity College, Dublin (MS. 50, formerly A. 4. 20), does not apparently contain any reference to the Conceptio B. Mariae. It should be noticed also that, so far as our evidence enables us to judge, *the primitive Irish metrical calendar,* now represented by the three Museum copies, of which Galba, A. *XVIII.* is the most important, is *older* than the Martyrology of Tallaght."

OUR LADY OF WASHINGTON
Crypt of National Shrine—F. de Henwood

CHAPTER XXI

OUR NATIONAL PATRONESS: AMERICAN DOCUMENTS

For many years previous to 1854, Catholics in all quarters of the world had sent letter upon letter to Rome urging the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception. This was true to such an extent that Pope Gregory XVI had intended to take steps towards the fulfillment of this desire of so many of the faithful. However, in the designs of Providence it was to his illustrious successor, Pius IX, that the honor was to fall.

The final movement which led to the definition was inaugurated by the encyclical letter of Piux IX, "Ubi primum," sent to the hierarchy throughout the world, asking their opinions. This was issued February 2, 1849, and it was in response to this that the Seventh Provincial Council of Baltimore published the decree, contained in this chapter, in which the American hierarchy expressed its approval of the definition.

Americans may well be proud of the fact that three years before this encyclical of Pius IX, the Sixth Council of Baltimore, presided over by Archbishop Eccleston, manifested its faith in the Immaculate Conception by decreeing that the Blessed Virgin Mary, under the title of the Immaculate Conception, was henceforth the Patroness of the Church in the United States. An excerpt from the decree is given here.

Decree of 1846

We take this occasion, brethren, to communicate to you the determination, unanimously adopted by us, to place ourselves, and all entrusted to our charge throughout the United States, under the special patronage of the holy Mother of God, whose immaculate conception is venerated by the piety of the faithful throughout the Catholic church. By the aid of her prayers, we entertain the confident hope that we will be strengthened to perform the arduous duties of our ministry, and that you will be enabled to practise the sublime virtues, of which her life presents a most perfect example. The Holy Ghost, by her own lips, has foretold that all generations shall call her blessed; and we can not doubt that a blessing is attached to those who take care to fulfill this prediction. To her, then, we commend you, in the confidence that, through the one Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a redemption for all, she will obtain for us grace and salvation.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

Election of Our National Patroness*

What wonder, then that in her own sweet month of May, the Fathers of the Council of 1846 held in Baltimore—twenty-two bishops, with their theologians—should solemnly elect as Patroness of the United States of America the Blessed Virgin Mary, immaculately conceived? The Fathers had been trained in her honor, they had lived for her service, they desired to add this crowning glory to their life-long prayer and praise, and at the same time to show their zeal for the true interests of this country, by entreating her protection for it in this eminent and public way. The next year this election was confirmed by the sovereign Pontiff,[1] and now forever in the grand public session that closes these august assemblies, after the Te Deum has been sung, the cantors, richly coped, stand before the altar and intone their first acclamation to the Most High God. That chorused, they burst forth—

"Beatissimae Virgini Mariae, sine labe originali conceptae, harum Provinciarum Patronae, honor aeternus!"

And in chorus the venerable bishops, the theologians and attendant priests, and the whole multitude of people, repeat the glad ascription, and then, swelling to vaulted roof, and filling aisle and nave and broad cathedral sanctuary, rolls in deep, majestic chorus the solemn Amen! Amen!

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[1] Decretum:

Cum R. P. D. Archiepiscopus Baltimorensis ejusque Suffraganei Episcopi Concilium Sextum Provinciale mense Maio anno 1846 celebrantes, supplices petiissent ut a S. Sede approbaretur electio quam ipsi in Concilio fecerunt Bmae. Mariae Virginis sine labe originali conceptae in Patronam Septentrionalis Americae Foederatae Provinciarum; * * * Emi. ac Revmi. Patres in congregatione generali de propaganda Fide censuerunt supplicandum Ssmo. Dno nostro ut pientissimis Concilii votis annuere dignentur.

Hanc vero S. Cong. sententiam in audientia die 7 Februarii 1847 habita Ssmus Dns noster Pius divina providentia PP. IX. benigne probavit in omnibus.

* Macleod, *History of the Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary in North America.*

Excerpta

Ex Concilio Baltimorensi Provinciali Septimo

habito An. MDCCCXLIX mense maio

cui interfuere Archiepiscopi Baltimorensis ac Sancti Ludovici cum XXII Episcopis

Prima Congregatio Publica

Die 7 maii, hora quarta p. m., habita est prima Congregatio publica in Ecclesia metropolitana.

Praefuit Illmus ac Rmus Archiepiscopus Baltimorensis; aderant Episcopi supramemorati, secretarii et theologi.

Invocata Sancti Spiritus assistentia per Antiph. *Veni Sancte Spiritus,* Rmus D. Archiepiscopus plurium theologorum sententias circa Immaculatam B. Virginis Mariae Conceptionem exquisivit; qua devotione populus fidelis erga illam sit animatus, quodnamque desiderium esse videatur, ut ab Apostolica Sede, tamquam Ecclesiae Catholicae doctrina definiatur eiusdem Beatissimae Virginis Conceptionem ab originali labe fuisse prorsus immunem.

Decreta

Concilii Baltimorensis Provincialis Septimi
mense maio 1849 celebrati

1. Perlectis Literis Encyclicis Summi Pontificis Pii IX, quibus significavit se vehementer optare ut Episcopi totius Catholici Orbis per literas ipsi referrent, qua devotione Clerus populusque fidelis erga Immaculatae Virginis Conceptionem sint animati; Patribus omnibus visum est respondere, Clerum populumque fidelem in Foederatis Americae Statibus magna flagrare erga eamdem devotione.

2. Censuerunt pariter Patres Summo Pontifici significandum gratum sibi fore ut, veluti Catholicae Ecclesiae doctrinam definiat, si id sapientissimo suo iudicio opportunum videatur, Beatissimae Virginis Mariae Conceptum Immaculatum omnino fuisse, atque ab omni prorsus originalis culpae labe immunem.

Corcordat cum originali, quod asservatur in Archivo
S. C. de Propag. Fide.
I. Ph. Card. Fransoni, Praef.

Parcri, Parte III, vol. VI, pp. 655-657.

MARY THE MOTHER OF CHRIST *

What grace can accomplish in His creatures, God has shown in the person of her whom He chose to be His mother, preserving her from all stain and endowing her with such pureness of heart that she is truly "full of grace" and "blessed among women." The unique privilege of Mary as cooperating in the Incarnation entitles her to reverence and honor; but in the Catholic mind it is love that prompts veneration for the Mother of Christ. It is indeed beyond comprehension that any who sincerely love Jesus, should be cold or indifferent in regard to His mother. No honor that we may pay her can ever equal that which God himself has conferred, and much less can it detract from the honor that is due to Him.

In keeping with her singular dignity is the power of Mary's intercession. If the prayers of holy men avail to obtain the divine assistance, the petitions of Mary in our behalf must be far more efficacious. With good reason, then, does the Church encourage the faithful to cultivate a tender devotion for the Blessed Virgin. But if all generations should call her blessed, and if the peoples of earth should glory in her protection, we in the United States have a particular duty to honor Mary Immaculate as the heavenly Patroness of our country. Let her blessed influence preserve our Catholic homes from all contagion of evil, and keep our children in pureness of heart. Let us also pay her the tribute of public honor in a way that will lead all our people to a fuller appreciation of Mary, the perfect woman and the surpassing model of motherhood. As Pope Benedict has declared, it is eminently fitting that the devotion of American Catholics to the Mother of God should find expression in a temple worthy of our Celestial Pa-

* From *The Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of the United States*, Washington, D. C., 1919.

troness. May the day soon dawn when we shall rejoice at the completion of so grand an undertaking; for, as the Holy Father says in commending the project of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, "our human society has reached that stage in which it stands in most urgent need of the aid of Mary Immaculate, no less than of the joint endeavors of all mankind."

THROUGH THE NATIONAL SHRINE ALL AMERICA HONORS THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY

Newfoundland to Mexico, Alaska to Porto Rico, have joined in the glorious work of building our first American monument to the Blessed Mother of God.

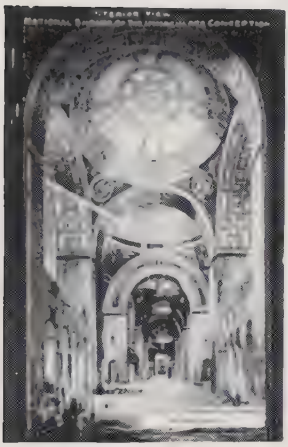
Were it built to reach the heavens it would not attain the height of her exalted virtues.

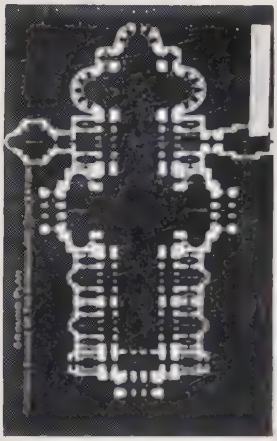
Were it to extend from shore to shore it would not equal the breadth of her great love.

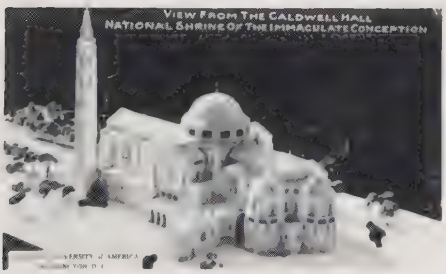
Were the marble of snowy whiteness it could not portray the purity of her life.

Were the riches of the earth showered as votive offerings they would pale before Mary's Priceless Gift to us—her life's blood—Jesus, our Saviour.

Arrival of the Foundation Stone for the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington, D. S., September 21, 1920. Left to right: Rt. Rev. Msgr. Geo. A. Dougherty; Rev. Dr. Bernard A. McKenna; Bishop Thomas J. Shahan, D.D.; Rt. Rev. Msgr. Philip Bernardini







National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Catholic University, Washington, D. C.

CHAPTER XXII

AMERICA UNDER MARY'S PROTECTION

By Bishop Shahan

The choicest gift of Spain to the New World was devotion to the Blessed Mother of God, particularly as Mary Immaculate. From that August day in 1492, when Columbus quitted the port of Palos on the tiny caraval *Santa Maria* and that October day on which he erected the first chapel of Mary Immaculate in the New World, down to 1760, when the Crown of Spain placed all its American colonies under the protection of the Spotless Queen of Heaven, Spanish love of Mary illuminates brightly the American annals of that once mighty monarchy, though with no more splendor than the similar faith of the children of Portugal.

In this respect, however, the annals of Our Blessed Mother in North America are no less interesting and instructive, revealing as they do the intimate relationship between the preaching of the Gospel and the growth of religion and piety in the hearts of the faithful. The earliest white settlement, Saint Augustine, was solemnly founded on the feast of the Nativity of Mary (September 8, 1565), and the great Spanish devotion to the Immaculate Conception was surely inaugurated in Florida on that auspicious day. In Canada, French zeal and piety created in 1643 the settlement of Villemarie or Montreal, the "City of Mary," and solemnly consecrated to God under her sweet name the immemorial sacred hearths of the Hurons as a missionary center, a burg of safety, and a trading post.

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* From *History of the National Shrine*, vol. I, "The Crypt."

Its founder, Paul de Chaumeday, Seigneur of Maisonneuve, was a most devout client of Mary, in whose honor he had taken a vow of perpetual chastity and whose rosary and Little Office he never failed to recite daily. From that original center of chivalrous devotion to Mary has radiated constantly through Canada and the United States the tender devotion to the Mother of God which the Sulpicians brought with them from France. Wonderful women like Mademoiselle Mance and the Venerable Marguerite Bourgeoys began there, under the auspices of Mary, the highest Christian life of charity and faith, exemplified also at Quebec in the life of the Venerable Marie de l'Incarnation, and continued ever since in a countless series of Catholic Sisterhoods with their noble record of hospitals, schools and institutional service of every kind.

These saintly pioneers of American devotion to Mary continued the pious traditions of Champlain and his Franciscans (1616), soon taken up most gloriously by the Jesuits of France, who brought to the conquest of the savage soul all the pure and holy ardor of the Crusades. From their residence at Sillery, near Quebec (1625), where a daily Mass was founded in honor of the Mother of God, to thank her more worthily and invoke her more efficaciously, they went forth into the vast and trackless domains of Canada, fishers of men and hunters of souls, until their annals of martyrdom were as rich with praise as those of the Colosseum.

Through forest and valley, by lake and river, across portages and in mountain passes they sang joyously the "Salve Regina" and the "Ave Maris Stella" and, departing, blessed every great natural site with the name of Mary until the whole land became vocal with her power and glory. They mark on this continent, and will ever mark, the highest reach of spiritual exaltation, of self-sacrifice for the extension of the Kingdom of God.

Marquette a Knight of Mary

Their devotion to Mary Immaculate found its highest expression in Father James Marquette, whose mother had inspired him from youth with an intense love of our Blessed Lady. All know that to his consuming love of the heathen tribes sitting in moral darkness we owe the discovery and exploration of the Mississippi, but it is not so well known that he was a perfect knight of the Immaculate Conception, placed his great voyage under the protection of Mary Immaculate, and promised to give her name to the mighty flood when discovered. Every day as this wonderful missionary floated down the river, past the now populous centers of Iowa, Missouri and Illinois, he sang the praise of Mary Immaculate, and placed in her his entire confidence amid perils of every kind. It was under her glorious auspices that Marquette preached, instructed and baptised.

Finally, on the banks of the Illinois, he gave up his brave spirit on the feast of the Immaculate Conception (1675), amid the snows and the winds of winter, his eyes on the crucifix and on his lips the prayer, "Mother of God, be mindful of me." Surely no land was ever more completely placed under the protection of our Blessed Mother.

The great State of Maryland was founded by English Catholics (1634) flying from persecution. The colonists were most pious clients of Mary Immaculate; saved from shipwreck by her intercession, they named after her the bay and river and town of their original settlement, gave the name of Mary to the first female Indian converts, built a chapel in honor of the Immaculate Conception, and gave the glorious name of Mary to the embryo state which has ever since retained it. Similarly, Spanish missionaries had brought her dear name at an earlier date into the vast regions of Texas and California, where rivers and mountains and

valleys are yet honored by it, and where the names of many towns give evidence of the devotion to Mary which burned in the hearts of the early Franciscans and Dominican missionaries.

In a word, in so far as the territory of the United States and Canada was originally discovered and settled by Catholics, their devotion to Our Blessed Mother, and in particular to Mary Immaculate, is vouched for by every page of our history and confirmed by all the features of nature. In more recent times the intimate appeal of the Mother of God to our American Catholic hearts asserts itself in new and striking ways. If we fix at about seventeen thousand the number of Catholic churches, missionary chapels and public or semi-public oratories in the United States, how many of them are dedicated to Our Blessed Mother?

A cursory perusal of the list of churches in any diocese will reveal the fact that a very large percentage of the churches are dedicated to the divine honor under the invocation of Mary Immaculate or some other title of the Queen of Heaven. They vary in size and beauty from the noble cathedral to the chapel of the hamlet, but one and all they confess that the United States and Canada are no less devoted to the honor and glory of the Mother of God than the older European peoples, who made the fine arts the handmaidens of Mary and all their lovely products in her service "a ramble through the beautiful."

CONGREGATIONS HONOR HER NAME

In her honor have arisen great congregations of priests like the Oblates of Mary Immaculate to evangelize the vast Northwest, while Carmelites, Servites, Marists, and others wear likewise her holy livery. In the United States alone

over sixty thousand Sisters, each one bearing the name of Mary, devote themselves to every kind of educational and charitable work. Sodalities, like the Children of Mary, and confraternities, like the Rosary Societies, are attached to many thousands of churches and chapels. The most popular of our devotions, the rosary, is the habitual devotion of millions of American Catholics, while scapulars, medals, statues and pictures attest in every household our irresistible love of the Mother of God and the universal prayer for her holy intercession. Many beautiful shrines of Mary, more or less widely known, exert a far-reaching influence.

From every Catholic land of Europe, the Irish and the Germans, the Italians and the Slavs have added their quota of ancestral piety toward the Mother of God and have contributed each their share toward our American devotion to her. Nowhere, in particular, are the Month of Mary and the October devotions more popular. It is clear that Mary Immaculate is today no less the celestial friend and protectress of this land of destiny than when Father Marquette first chanted the "Salve Regina" above the broad flood of the Father of Waters. We need not wonder, therefore, that the Sixth Provincial Council of Baltimore set its formal approval in 1846 on the selection of Mary Immaculate as our patroness in heaven or that the Holy See soon confirmed their action.

In 1849 the Seventh Provincial Council informed the Holy See that the Fathers thought it proper that the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary should be defined as a dogma, and in 1855 the Eighth Provincial Council gave voice to the universal joy of American Catholics at the long expected papal definition of the previous year.

In 1866 the Second Plenary Council of Baltimore decreed that the feast, December 8, should be observed in every diocese as a holy day of obligation, and the Third Plenary

Council in 1884 placed it among the six feasts of obligation. Leo XIII confirmed this decree and added to it the weight of his authority. In 1914 Pius X solemnly approved the project of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception commended to him in person by Cardinal Gibbons, and in 1919 Benedict XV ratified in a beautiful letter to Cardinal Gibbons the act of his predecessor. He urged at the same time all American Catholics to contribute generously to the great church projected at the National Capital in honor of Mary Immaculate, particularly all societies of men and women, and himself offered, as a magnificent and generous gift, a full size mosaic copy of Murillo's Immaculate Conception, now in the Prado gallery.

Since, therefore, every page of American Catholic life bears the impress of Mary's name and influence, and since the whole continent is so visibly dedicated to her in the most solemn manner, every sentiment of gratitude for her protection and intercession urges us to honor at all times the great Mother of God, first by a Christian life, and then by the completion of that noble monument in her honor, the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at Washington on the grounds of the Catholic University, to which Pius X and Benedict XV and Pius XI have urged us with eloquent words, and more eloquent generosity, and whose corner-stone was laid in 1920 by Cardinal Gibbons, in the presence of seventy bishops. It was his last act of a national character, and in his dying hours it was a great spiritual comfort to him that his name was inseparably connected with the great church in Mary's honor, even though he was not destined to see its mighty dome dominate the waters of the Potomac.

INTERIOR OF UPPER CHURCH

National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Catholic University, Washington, D. C.

DEVOTION TO THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION ENCOURAGED BY THREE POPES

Apostolic Letter of Pope Pius X

To Our Beloved Son, James Cardinal Gibbons, of the Title of Santa Maria in Trastevere Archbishop of Baltimore.

Beloved Son: Health and Apostolic Benediction.

Many pious Catholic women have by their intelligent zeal added another remarkable proof to the numerous evidences of active charity which we so frequently receive from the United States. We have been informed that they have created an association for the collection of funds to build on the grounds of the Catholic University of America a church which shall foster the piety of the youthful students and meet the spiritual needs of the vicinity. How highly We esteem this project We need not say, since nothing could be more useful to the Church or further more helpfully the welfare of the Republic. Both Church and State are, indeed, deeply indebted to those who guide the youthful mind at an early age to the places where it may be more fully and efficaciously imbued with that holy fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom.

It is most desirable, therefore, that all Catholics should promptly and generously contribute toward the happy completion of this Church, which so many praiseworthy Catholic women have undertaken. In this way will arise a masterpiece of religious architecture which will lift heavenward the minds of every student who enters it, make him thirst for wisdom from above, fill his heart with the same, and preserve it religiously while he lives.

May these holy prayers be heard through the Immaculate Mother of God, in whose honor it has been decided

to build this Church, and may her motherly eyes watch day and night over the Catholic University at Washington.

Meanwhile as a pledge of divine favor and of our benevolence, We give you, Beloved Son, the Association of ladies above mentioned, your clergy and faithful, with all Our heart, the Apostolic benediction. Given at Rome at St. Peters, the eighth day of July, 1914, the eleventh year of Our Pontificate.

PIUS PP. X.

POPE BENEDICT XV TO AMERICAN BISHOPS

To James Gibbons, Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, Archbishop of Baltimore, William O'Connell, Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church, Archbishop of Boston, and to the other Archbishops and Bishops of the United States of America. Beloved Sons, Venerable Brethren, Health and Apostolic Benediction.

. . . We made known to you also how deeply We rejoice to hear that popular devotion to Mary Immaculate has greatly increased in view of the proposal to build on the grounds of the University the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. This most holy purpose merited the approval and cordial praise of Our Predecessor of happy memory, Pius X. We, too, have always hoped that at the earliest possible date there would be built in the National Capital of the great Republic, a temple worthy of the Celestial Patroness of all America, and that all the sooner because, under the special patronage of Mary Immaculate your University has already attained a high degree of prosperity. The University, We trust, will be the attractive center about which will gather all who love the teachings of Catholicism; similarly, We hope that to this great church as to their own special sanctuary will come in ever greater numbers, moved

by religion and piety, not only the students of the University, actual and prospective, but also the Catholic people of the whole United States. O may the day soon dawn when you, Venerable Brethren, will rejoice at the completion of so grand an undertaking! Let the good work be pushed rapidly to completion, and for that purpose let everyone who glorifies in the name of Catholic contribute more abundantly than usual to the collections for this church, and not individuals alone, but also all your societies, those particularly which, by their rule, are bound to honor in a special way the Mother of God. Nor in this holy rivalry should your Catholic women be content with second place, since they are committed to the promotion of the glory of Mary Immaculate in proportion as it redounds to the glory of their own sex.

After thus exhorting you, it behooves Us now to set an example that will lead Our hearers to contribute with pious generosity to this great work of religion, and for this reason We have resolved to ornament the high altar of this Church with a gift of peculiar value. In due time, We shall send to Washington an image of the Immaculate Conception made by Our command in the Vatican Mosaic Workshop, which shall be at once a proof of Our devotion towards Mary Immaculate and Our Good-will toward the Catholic University. Our human society, indeed, has reached that stage in which it stands in most urgent need of the aid of Mary Immaculate, no less than of the joint endeavors of all mankind. It moves now along the narrow edge which separates security from ruin, unless it be firmly reestablished on the basis of charity and justice.

In this respect, greater efforts are demanded of you than of all others, owing to the vast influence which you exercise among your people. Retaining, as they do, a most firm hold on the principles of reasonable liberty and of Christian civilization, they are destined to have the chief role in the res-

toration of peace and order, and in the reconstruction of human society on the basis of these same principles, when the violence of these tempestuous days shall have passed. Meantime, We very lovingly in the Lord impart the Apostolic benediction, intermediary of divine graces and pledge of Our paternal good-will, to you Our Beloved Sons, to Our Venerable Brethren and to the clergy and people of your flocks, but in a particular manner to all those who shall now or in the future contribute to the building of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at Washington.

Given at St. Peter's, Rome, the tenth day of April, 1919, in the fifth year of Our Pontificate.

BENEDICT PP. XV.

APOSTOLIC LETTERS OF POPE PIUS XI

To Our Beloved Sons William Cardinal O'Connell of the Title of St. Clement, Archbishop of Boston, and Dennis Cardinal Dougherty of the Title of Sts. Nereus and Achilles, Archbishop of Philadelphia, and to our Other Venerable Brothers the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States of North America.

Beloved Sons and Venerable Brothers,

Greetings and Apostolic Blessing.

Knowing full well how much can be done by Catholic Institutions for the right formation of heart and mind, We at the beginning of our Pontificate, cannot but turn our whole thought and care upon those noble seats of learning which, like your University, have been established in order to train up teachers of truth and to spread more abundantly throughout the world the light of knowledge and of Christian wisdom.

Accordingly, since We have ever loved that great work from the time it was founded, at the instance of the Ameri-

can bishops, by Our Predecessor of happy memory, Leo XIII, also We have not failed, as occasion offered, to praise the zeal of those who strove by all manner of means to further it, in the firm conviction that the Church in America would derive the greatest benefit from a home of study wherein Catholic youth are more thoroughly trained in virtue and sacred science.

Now, among other reasons for founding the University which the Bishops presented in their letter to the Holy See after the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, was "that condition of mind which can be protected against widespreading error and strengthened in faith by the deeper investigation of truth both revealed and natural on the part of the faithful and especially on the part of the clergy." Weighty as they then were, these reasons are of even greater weight at this time when all are striving to the best of their power for the restoration of order in human society. For it is plain that no such reconstruction will come about unless youth be rightly educated. Nor is any and every sort of education fitted for the attainment of the desired end, but only that in which instruction is based on religion and virtue as its sure foundation which the Church unceasingly has commended in every possible way.

But it is essential that youth while they study should be kindled with ardor for knowledge and piety alike, especially by devotion to the Great Mother of God who is the Seat of Wisdom and the Source of Piety, and therefore the American Bishops, Protectors of the University of Washington, have formed the excellent design of buildings on its grounds the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. For it is fitting that side by side with the temple of knowledge should stand the house of prayer, because "godliness is profitable to all things" and "knowledge without piety puffeth up." For this reason We, like our Predecessors of

happy memory Pius X and Benedict XV, cherish with fatherly affection both the University and the newly planned Shrine; and We pray that this great work may soon be brought to completion so that from it as from the seat of her loving kindness, the Virgin Mother may bestow upon all America the heavenly gifts of wisdom and salvation.

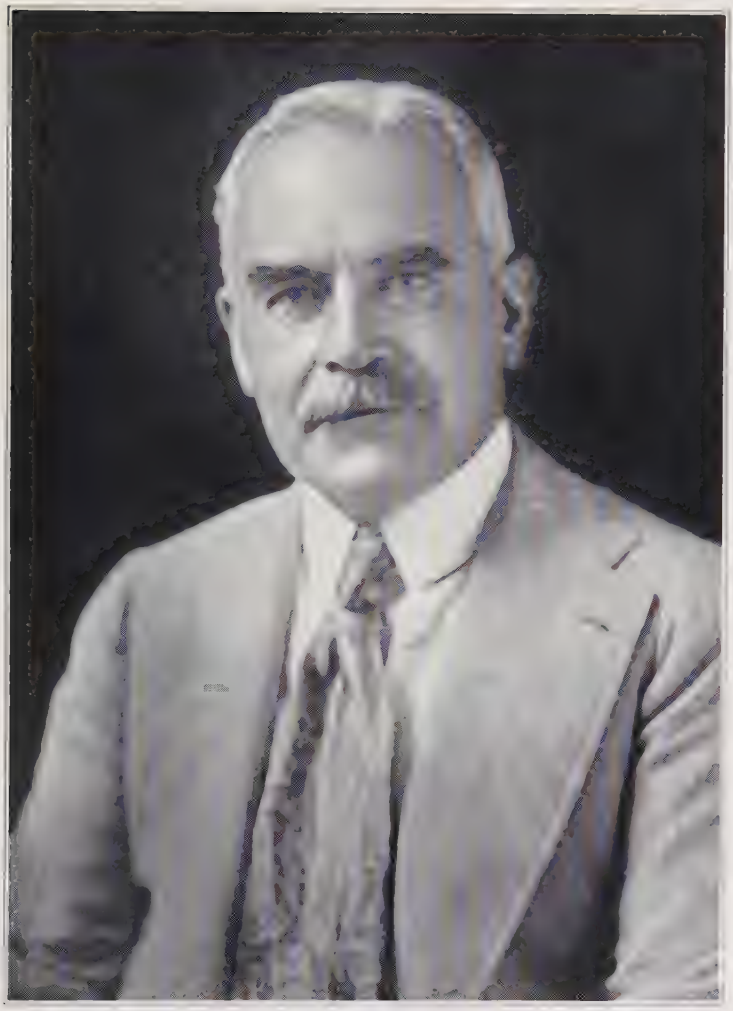
Given at St. Peter's, Rome, on the twenty-fifth of April MCMXXII, in the first year of Our Pontificate.

PIUS XI, *Pope.*

CARDINAL GIBBONS' LETTER TO HIERARCHY

In a "pastoral letter" to the Catholic Hierarchy, dated April 10, 1919, Cardinal Gibbons said:

"It is indeed beyond comprehension that any who sincerely love Jesus, should be cold or indifferent in regard to His mother . . . But if all generations should call her blessed, and if the peoples of earth should glory in her protection, we in the United States have a particular duty to honor Mary Immaculate as the heavenly Patroness of our country . . . Let us also pay her the tribute of public honor in a way that will lead all our people to a fuller appreciation of Mary, the perfect woman and the surpassing model of motherhood. As Pope Benedict has declared, it is eminently fitting that the devotion of American Catholics to the Mother of God should find expression in a temple worthy of our Celestial Patroness. May the day soon dawn when we shall rejoice at the completion of so grand an undertaking, for, as the Holy Father says in commending the project of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, 'our human society has reached that stage in which it stands in most urgent need of the aid of Mary Immaculate, no less than of the joint endeavors of all mankind.'"



MR. GEORGE LOGAN DUVAL

Founder of the Chair of the Immaculate Conception, Catholic University, Washington, D. C.

A CATHOLIC LAYMAN'S TRIBUTE

The following extract, from the address of the donor of the Chair of the Immaculate Conception, who was asked to speak to a body of young girls about to render homage to the Immaculate Conception at the Convent of the Cenacle, of St. Regis, New York, will edify our readers:

"Having been asked to say something to you on this devotion which appeals to me so strongly, and particularly as you are about to render homage to the Immaculate Conception, it may not be amiss to remind you what it means.

"A unique and most signal honor which differentiates Mary from all the rest of humanity—the genesis of the many other honors that came upon her. So great, indeed, is the honor that the Church deliberated for more than eighteen centuries before declaring it a dogma; that is, an article of faith incumbent upon the belief of all Catholics. A radical departure from the fundamental law, it was disputed by some early Doctors of the Church, including St. Thomas Aquinas, the greatest in learning and in theology. This difference of opinion delayed the proclamation. Do not understand that St. Thomas and those who agreed with him were lacking in devotion to the Blessed Virgin. On the contrary, they accorded her all the other honors which are so much her due, but they held that this one would be a denial or inconsistent with the fiat that the scheme of redemption was an expiation on behalf of all mankind without exception. It is incomprehensible to us now how there could have been any dispute or difference of opinion concerning a doctrine which when proclaimed was received by the entire Catholic world with unbounded joy. To regard it from an entirely human point of view, where is the worthy child who would not bestow on his or her mother the ultimate proof of deference and affection? This being true in the finite state, how immeasurably is it intensified in the Infinite! Since there are

none to deny the power to make Mary an exception to all humanity, it was only the exercise of that power that was at issue, and since the All Powerful manifested His willingness on various occasions to perform miracles (a suspension of the natural law) where could there be so great an incentive as in the disposition of an Almighty Son towards His chosen Mother? To accept the doctrine of the Incarnation is to accept all that logically attaches to it; primarily, that guile even in its remotest form cannot touch the great Victim, therefore guile even in its remotest form cannot touch the Mother who gave Him birth. This in effect is what the Church says in the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, and it is difficult to see how any Christian of any denomination can differ with us on this point. The reason that I dilate on this theme is that only a few days ago an intelligent Episcopalian said, 'I cannot understand how you Catholics believe in the Immaculate Conception.'

"This dogma, although one of the most important of our articles of faith in respect of the Blessed Virgin, is but one of the many forms of devotion to her taught by the Church. All creeds are alike in the ultimate object of their worship—albeit all other creeds are content with the symbol while we hold to the substance—but all other creeds leave exclusively to us the unique privilege of a devotion to the Blessed Virgin which is only short of worship. It has already been said that the worthy child lavishes its love upon its mother. No honor and no pleasure is so great as that which comes from respect and deference shown to her. Arguing then from the lesser to the greater, we may be certain that no tribute is more acceptable to Him than that shown to His mother, whether it takes the form of offerings at her shrines, of hymns of praise, or of prayers addressed to her. Indeed, it has been said that an angel chorus accompanies us each time we repeat the Ave Maria."

The Board of Trustees of the Catholic University of America

WHEREAS

George Logan Duval

of New York has established at the Catholic University of America a theological foundation to be known as

The Duval Chair of the Immaculate Conception

for the purpose of teaching the life and example of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of demonstrating from Catholic theology and history her preeminent place in the plan of divine redemption, and

WHEREAS, to secure this foundation in perpetuity he has donated to the Catholic University of America the sum of

Fifty-five Thousand Dollars

and WHEREAS, this munificent gift does great honor to the faith and piety of the generous donor, and

WHEREAS, this foundation is unique in the annals of Catholic Education and offers to the Catholic faithful everywhere a noble example of the religious uses of one's earthly goods, be it

RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Catholic University express to the liberal and patriotic Benefactor its gratitude, and assure him of perpetual remembrance in all the prayers of the University and of a share in all its good works.

Given at Washington this tenth day of April, nineteen hundred and eighteen.

J. Card. Gibbons,
Chancellor.

Thomas J. Shahan
Rector.

THE GEORGE LOGAN DUVAL CHAIR OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

In the Library of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception the following tablet has been erected:

Ave Maria

This tablet commemorates the generous gift of

GEORGE LOGAN DUVAL

on March 20, 1918

Founding

THE CHAIR OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

in the Catholic University
to teach
the Life and Example
of the Blessed Virgin
and to exhibit
from Catholic Theology and History
her Eminent place
in the Plan
of Man's Redemption

INVOCATION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN IN BEHALF OF OUR COUNTRY

Most Blessed Virgin Mother, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to accept the decree of Holy Mother Church, placing Our Beloved Country under the protection of the Immaculate Conception. Accord it Thy continuous care and powerful influence that God may safeguard it from all danger and permit it to fulfill its high mission among the peoples of the earth.

THE CHAIR OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

The *Chair of the Immaculate Conception* was inaugurated on May 1, 1918, by the Rt. Rev. Bishop Shahan, in the Assembly Room of McMahon Hall, Catholic University. Each succeeding Wednesday of May conferences were given in the chapel of Divinity Hall at 4.45 by Rev. Bernard A. McKenna, S.T.L.; the subjects treated being *Christ and Mary; Mary and the Church; Mary and the World,* and *The Immaculate Conception.*

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION AND LOURDES

Hilaire Belloc wrote some years ago that "if men would, or could, detach themselves from their own time and place, Lourdes would be the most interesting business in the world." (1) Striking as this statement may seem, it is but an echo of truth. Lourdes is interesting because it is vital to the world. It may be true that the majority of men in the world never advert to Lourdes but that does not prove that it is not a power. How few of us think, except rarely, of the beating of our own hearts? So like that vital part of the physical organism, Lourdes has its place effective if silent, in the functioning of the world. The world is much more than earth and sky and water and the activities of beasts and men; the world and all that it holds are rungs on a ladder and the ladder itself is the mind of man. Up he goes or down he comes and his movements are dependent on his ideas. If his ideas are true and show him the real meaning of the world, he goes up or out of himself; if they are false, he comes down or into himself. Man depends for his happiness and success upon his ideas. And that is precisely why Lourdes is so important. A man may go through life without an idea of Lourdes, but he will not go through it so well.

Ideas on religion are fundamental for man. These ideas may differ as star differs from star in glory, but yet as William James says, "There is a certain uniform deliverance in which all religions appear to meet. It consists of two parts:

(1) Belloc, Hilaire, Preface to "Lourdes," Jörgensen, J., London, 1904, p.v.

(1) An uneasiness; (2) its solution. The uneasiness reduced to its simplest terms is a sense that *there is something wrong about us* as we naturally stand. The solution is a sense that we are saved from the wrongness by making proper connections with the higher powers." For a Catholic, the "something that is wrong about us" is Original Sin; the *solution is the Redemption. Christ redeemed us on Calvary through the death* of the body which He took to hide His Divinity; Christ applies His Redemption today to the souls of men through the Life of His Mystic Body in which He hides both Humanity and Divinity. Christ takes Original Sin from our souls in Baptism but He leaves us a lifetime to cooperate with Him in combating its effects. By his disobedience, the First Adam brought "death into the world and all our woe"; by His obedience, the Second Adam lifted the sentence of death from the sons of men, but He left the "woe" as a salutary remembrance.

To remedy this woe, men often in history have lifted their eyes to the hills whence comes the help of God; but too often, their eyes were blinded by the things about them, the things that offered temporary surcease from woe. But we do not find God shortening the arms of His Redemption. In the Liturgy of the Church, even the casual student can trace certain definite signs of the beckoning, helping Finger of God. In the thirteenth century, for example, we find the little man of Assisi, Saint Francis, receiving the marks of Christ's victory in his flesh. Why? The oration in the Feast of the Stigmata gives the answer when it prays to Christ, "who when the world was growing cold, to inflame the hearts with the fire of love, didst renew the Sacred Marks of His Passion in the flesh of Blessed Francis." We have another manifestation of God's desire that man be mindful

of the Redemption in the visions of the Sacred Heart to Saint Margaret Mary. And in the Feast of the Apparition at Lourdes we read that "pilgrimages of this kind stir up faith, and turn the mind to Christian law, when the world is growing cold." It would seem that, all along the years, Christ "knowing what was in man" was afraid that man would forget that the greatest and only real problem in life had been solved on Calvary.

In all of this, Lourdes holds an outstanding place. Seventy years ago last Spring, in the ways of God's Providence, men's eyes were turned to a secluded spot beside a stream in France where a little girl knelt and prayed and saw a Lovely Lady. Since that day, millions of her fellow humans have gone there and knelt and prayed. They did not see the Lady but they knew Her influence. "They all found *something* which they had been able to find nowhere else—healing of mind for the sick, and in a very small proportion, healing of body also. And for the rest—a lifting up out of the common ruts and rounds of life, the inspiration of a rarer and loftier atmosphere, and a closer touch with things spiritual than had been theirs before. For no man, whether hale or sick, having experienced Lourdes, can ever lose the sense of it entirely." (1)

And the "sense of Lourdes" is hidden from the great of the world and "revealed to little ones." It is the "sense" which was manifested to Blessed Bernardette Soubirous, the little girl in the story, when she asked the Lovely Lady to tell Her name. In her own words: "Then she lifted up her hands, laid them against each other on her breast, and looked to Heaven. After that she slowly took them apart, and as she bent forward towards me she said in a voice that trembled, "I am the Immaculate Conception."

(1) Oxenham, John—The Wonder of Lourdes, p. 38.

Four years before this scene, on the 8th of December, 1854, Pope Pius IX proclaimed as a dogma of the Catholic Faith, the truth that "Mary from the first moment of Her conception, in virtue of the foreseen merits of Her Son and Redeemer, was preserved from every stain of original sin." This doctrine is found already in the teachings of such Fathers of the Church as Irenaeus and Ephraim; the Franciscans in the later Middle Ages; a feast in honor of Mary's Immaculate Conception had been established. The promulgation by Pius IX was only the culmination of a long development. It was giving out a Truth with a new force, the determined dissemination of an idea.

For the Immaculate Conception is *an idea,* another fragment of Divine Truth, with which men can surcharge their minds. An idea it is, glorious, thrilling, and consoling but it becomes tangible and concrete in Lourdes. Up to that time, men could look off into the great world of ideas, could dip down into their own souls, and find the belief in the Immaculate Conception potent. As in the Apocalyptic vision, they could see "the great sign which appeared in the heavens, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars." XII, 1. But now, at Lourdes, they could see "an excellent compendium of the Catholic theology" on the matter. Two thousand years before, Mary as the Immaculate Conception was the perfect way that Christ chose to bring Himself to men, and have men brought to Him. At Lourdes today, Mary, as the Immaculate Conception, does the same.

The Immaculate Conception may be called the first victory of the Redemption. Mary was conceived immaculate, free from every stain of original sin, through the foreseen merits of Christ. Lourdes flashing, as it does, the Immaculate Con-

ception before the world, is a constant reminder that the Redemption of humanity by Christ is a living thing today, tomorrow and forever. Here men come with bruised hearts that need healing, broken bodies that need mending, tired souls that need quickening and life. And the fruits of the Redemption is their new life and peace. Today, "Lourdes is a spiritual radio-active force which shoots its vitalizing sparks broadcast through a morally, mentally, and spiritually darkened world, with an ever-increasing intensity and benefit."

We get our ideas from reality and ideas are true in as far as they correspond to the real. Lourdes has brought the realities of the world of faith into the ken of man. Man has seen and felt, at Lourdes, the effects of the Redemption on the bodies and souls of men. Men have come to Lourdes doubting and without faith; they have gone away if not with faith, then at least puzzled by what they saw. They could realize that the power was not of Beelzebub, the prince of devils; the genuineness of everybody at Lourdes believe that conclusion. They could see that the results were not of science; science confessed itself baffled. Their only conclusion was of the Power beyond them; and at times, it was not given to them to see.

But to those who see, "at Lourdes, Mary is seen to stand, to all but outward eyes, in exactly that position in which at Nazareth, at Cana, in the Acts of the Apostles, the Catacombs, and in the whole history of Christendom, true lovers of her Son have always seen Her—a Mother of God and man, tender, authoritative, silent and effective." (1) They have never felt that Mary was taking the place of Her Son; she was simply bringing them to Him. It is a matter of fact that the cures effected at the procession of the Most Blessed

Sacrament—Christ's own Body—far outnumber those which take place at the baths. Lourdes for the believer is another repetition of the Gospel story. "There was a marriage feast and the Mother of Jesus was there with Her Son. There was no wine. She told Her Son what He already knew; He seemed to deprecate Her words; but He obeyed them, and the water became wine. There is at Lourdes not a marriage feast, but something very like a deathbed. The Mother of Jesus is there with her Son. It is She again who takes the initiative. "Here is water," she seems to say: "dig, Bernardette, and you will find it." But it is no more than water. Then She turns to Her Son. "They have water but no more." And then He comes forth in His power. "Draw out from all the sick beds of the world and bear them to the Governor of the Feast. Use the commonest things in the world—physical pain and common water. Bring them together, and wait until I pass by." Then Jesus of Nazareth passes by; and the sick leap from their beds, and the blind see, and the lepers are cleansed, and devils are cast out." (1)

Lourdes is answer to the world's prayer—even though an unwitting prayer—"Lord, increase our faith." Lourdes is something more than merely a great shrine, a great center of devotion. Lourdes is the scene of a great gift to men. It is possible that many of the children of men may not as much as hear of Lourdes; many others will hear and regard it as an old wives' tale; many again will look on Lourdes and fail to understand; many finally will even see its wonder, and feel their hearts burn as they walk in the way, but their eyes will be holden. "But for us who believe in God, and His Son and the Mother of God, because our intellect is satisfied, our

(1) Lourdes; Benson, Hugh, p. 81.
(1) Benson, p. 63.

heart kindled, our will braced by belief; and because without that belief all life falls into chaos, and human evidence is nullified, and all noble motive and emotion cease—for us who have received the gift of faith, in however small a measure, Lourdes is enough. Christ and His Mother are with us. Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, is the same yesterday, today, and forever." (2)

In the light of Lourdes, today's Feast takes on a deeper and fuller significance. When we kneel in spirit at the Grotto by the river Gave, and hear Mary whisper down the years, "I am the Immaculate Conception" we can enter more knowingly into the spirit of the Church when she sings out today in the Office, "Let us celebrate the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, let us adore the Lord Christ, her Son."

(2) Idem, p. 37.

THE FIVE LAST POPES - *Crypt of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception (Originals)*

Cardinal Gibbons' Jubilee Celebration *in 1919. In the front row are, left to right: Cardinal (then Archbishop and Apostolic Delegate to Australia) Ceretti; Cardinal O'Connell of Boston; Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore; Cardinal Begin of Canada and Apostolic Delegate (now Cardinal) Bonzano. Besides the Archbishops and Bishops this group contains the three subsequent Cardinals — Dougherty, Hayes and Mundelein--and two prominent Catholic laymen, Mr. George L. Duval, the donor of the Immaculate Conception Choir and also of the Lourdes Chapel in the National Shrine; and Sir James Ryan, a University trustee and donor of the Blessed Sacrament Chapel in the Crypt*

CHAPTER XXIII

CLASSICAL WORKS ON THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Apart from the Bibliography appended, the following works because of their authoritative significance are worthy of special mention.

THE PARERI

In the encyclical *Ubi primum,* issued on February 2, 1849, Pope Pius IX earnestly called upon all the bishops of the world to signify to him what the devotion of their clergy and faithful were towards the Immaculate Conception and how far they felt the desire to see it defined by the Holy See. This request brought out the sentiment of the entire Church; upwards of six hundred letters were sent in reply. These together with other letters from cathedral chapters, etc., decrees of Provincial Councils, opuscula relative to the Immaculate Conception, etc., were, by order of the Holy Father, published under the title *Pareri dell 'Episcopato Cattolico, di Capitoli, di Congregazioni, di Università, di Personaggi Ragguardevoli ecc., ecc. sulla Definizione Dogmatica dell 'Immacolato Concipimento della beata Vergine Maria Rassegnati alla Santità di Pio IX, P. M. in Occasione della Sua Enciclica data da Gaeta il 2 Febbraio 1849.* They are more commonly called the *Pareri.*

The *Pareri* are divided into four parts contained in ten octavo volumes, and were published at Rome between 1851 and 1854. The contents are as follows:

Part I Volumes I, II and III—The replies of the Bishops and in the last thirty pages of Volume III the *Primo indice generale alfabetico delle sedi arcivescovili e vescovili.*

de'cui rispettivi titolari si contegno le lettere in questa prima parte dei Pareri.

Part II Volume IV—Letters of cathedral chapters, religious Orders and the faithful.

Part III Volume V—Various opuscula on the Immaculate Conception.

Volume VI—Various opuscula and also extracts from Provincial Councils. The Council of Baltimore of 1849 is represented here.

Volume VII—Pastoral letters and the first supplement to Part I.

Volume VIII—Opuscula, pastoral letters and various documents.

Volume IX—The second supplement to the replies of the Bishops: the first part contains the petitions made to Pope Gregory XVI for a dogmatic definition; the second, those made to Pope Pius IX before his encyclical of February 2, 1849. The last forty pages contain the *Indice generale delle materie contenute nei nove volumi dei Pareri.*

Appendix I to Volume IX—The third supplement to the replies of the Bishops.

Appendix II to Volume IX—The fourth supplement to the replies of the Bishops and also a collection of various opuscula.

Part IV Volume X—The first part of the *Sylloge Monumentorum ad Mysterium Conceptionis Immaculatae Virginis Deiparae Illustrandum* by Antonio Ballerini, S.J. The second part of this work was published apart from the collection of the *Pareri* in 1856. Both parts are in Greek and Latin.

Histoire de la Definition Dogmatique de l'Immaculee Conception de la Tres-Sainte Vierge Marie

Par MGR. J. B. MALOU, *Évêque de Bruges*

Msgr. Malou (d. 1865) was one of the prominent theologians of the nineteenth century. Before being called to the episcopate he was a professor at Louvain. Doctor Pohle, in his article in the Catholic Encyclopedia on dogmatic theology, speaking of the restoration of that science in the latter half of the last century, says: "In France and Belgium the Dogmatic Theology of Cardinal Gousset of Reims, and the writings of Bishop Malou, of Bruges, exerted great influence."

The *Histoire de la Définition Dogmatique de l'Immaculée Conception* appears in the eighth volume of the *Summa Aurea De Laudibus Beatae Mariae Virginis* (Migne, Paris, 1866). It is unsurpassed for concise, complete treatment of a naturally intricate subject. The headings of the six articles into which the matter is divided will give a sufficiently clear notion of the work.

Article I

The nature of a dogmatic definition; the end which the Church has in view when making such a pronouncement; the circumstances in which it is made; the obligation it imposes on the faithful.

Article II

The pious belief of the Immaculate Conception was susceptible of definition when Pius IX pronounced his doctrinal judgement.

Article III

History of the definition of the Immaculate Conception: attempts made to secure a dogmatic definition (a) in the

fifteenth century, especially at the Council of Basle; (b) in the sixteenth century; (c) in the seventeenth century; (d) in the eighteenth century; (e) in the nineteenth century; preparations made in this century for the definition.

Article IV

The solemn definition of the Immaculate Conception, December the eighth, 1854.

Article V

The opportuneness of the definiiton.

Article VI

Advantages and practical results of the definition.

ENUMERATION DES DOCUMENTS

Relatifs a la Definition du Dogme de l'Immaculee Conception de la Tres-Sainte Vierge

L'ABBE SIRE

Abbé Sire was a professor at Saint-Sulpice at the time of the publication of the *Summa Aurea de Laudibus B. Virginis Mariae* (1866), in the eighth volume of which his *Énumeration des Documents* is found. The *Énumeration* occupies fourteen pages of a large quarto volume. The titles of the documents are given both in their original language and in French. The merit and utility of Abbé Sire's work may be seen from the following summary.

I Acts of the Holy See.

II Acts of the Bishops.
Replies to the encyclical of February 2, 1849, etc.

III Theological works.

A. Before the definition.

At the end of this section the various papal commissions which were instituted to consider the question previous to its definition are mentioned together with their work.

B. After the definition.

Here the pertinent theological works are listed according to countries: Italy, France, Spain, America, etc.

IV Although he does not list them, Abbé Sire mentions that he has collected sermons on the Immaculate Conception preached throughout the Catholic world.

V Lists of religious journals and periodical reviews of Europe and America from 1854 to 1860. Students could wish for more than the mere list of titles of journals and reviews such as are given in this section.

IV Works, brochures, articles, sermons, etc., *against* the Immaculate Conception.

DE ORTU ET PROGRESSU CULTUS AC FESTI IMMACULATI CONCEPTUS BEATAE DEI GENETRICIS VIRGINIS MARIAE

A. GRAVOIS, O.F.M.

This work of Father Gravois, O.F.M., has long been a work of reference for authors dealing with the origin and development of the cult and feast of the Immaculate Conception.

The author first considers the antiquity and object of the feast among the Greeks. He then traces its development in Spain under St. Ildephonsus, in England under St. Anselm, through the Council of Basle (1431-1449), and down to the

Constitution of Sixtus IV *Cum Praeexcelsa,* a document which gave a new impetus and encouragement to the celebration of the feast.

Father Gravois next reviews the teaching and acts favorable to the doctrine from Sixtus IV to the Council of Trent. The Office, Mass and Missals, and the acts of various popes of this period are duly treated. He has three interesting chapters on the title *Immaculate,* and four on the important Constitution *Sollicitudo* of Alexander VII. He notes the influence of the principle of St. Augustine touching devotion to the Immaculate Conception, and finally, the teaching of Bellarmine and Lambertini (Benedict XIV).

After a consideration of the teachings of St. Bernard and St. Thomas Aquinas, apparently contrary to the doctrine, the author devotes the concluding articles to the defenders of the doctrine, and to a narration of the many favors and graces received through special devotion to the Immaculate Conception.

(Summa Aurea, Vol. VIII, col. 290.)

CARDINAL LUIGI LAMBRUSCHINI and his DISSERTAZIONE POLEMICA SULL 'IMMACOLATO CONCEPIMENTO DI MARIA

Cardinal Luigi Lambruschini, a member of the Order of Barnabites, was one of the outstanding churchmen of the last century. From 1831 until the death of Gregory XVI, in 1846, he was papal Secretary of State. At the conclave which chose, as successor to Gregory, Cardinal Mastai-Ferretti (Pius IX), he received in the first ballot a majority of votes, not sufficient, however, for election.

In 1843, eleven years before the definition of the dogma

of the Immaculate Conception, Cardinal Lambruschini published at Rome his *Sull' Immacolato Concepimento di Maria Dissertazione Polemica.* His endeavor was to show that belief in Mary's Immaculate Conception was capable of definition by the Church. In a logical and convincing manner, proofs in favor of the belief are brought forward from the Scriptures, the Fathers, the Sovereign Pontiffs, the Councils and various theologians. St. Bernard and St. Thomas are held to be not unfavorable to the doctrine.

The work of the Cardinal was warmly received at Rome and throughout Europe. It was translated into all the languages of the Continent and in 1855 into English. Cardinal Lambruschini died in May, 1854, seven months before the accomplishment of the event which he had labored so earnestly to bring about.

LETTER OF PIUS IX TO FATHER PASSAGLIA, S.J.

Dilecto Filio Religioso Viro Carolo Passaglia
Presbytero Societatis Jesu, Doctori Decuriali
Theologiae Tradendae in Collegio Romano

Pius PP. IX.

Dilecte Fili, Religiose Vir Salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Laetissimo prorsus animo excepimus duo volumina ex typographaeo Nostri Consilii christianae fidei propagandae in lucem iam edita Operis, quod latina lingua a Te conscriptum, ac Nobis dicatum praesefert titulum "De Immaculato Deiparae semper Virginis Conceptu Commen-

tarius." Etsi vero gravissimis supremi Nostri Pontificatus curis continenter distenti, ac paene obruti nondum eadem volumina integra legere potuerimus veluti exoptamus, tamen ex illis, quae degustavimus non mediocrem certe iucunditatem cepimus. Namque perspeximus qua singulari sane pietate, doctrina, eruditione ac sermonis elegantia opus idem conficiendum curaveris, et qua summa industria ex sacris potissimum litteris, sanctisque Patribus ea colligere studueris, quae ad admirabilem et ineffabilem gloriosissimae Dei Genetricis Virginis Mariae sanctitatem, dignitatem, ejusque Immaculatam Conceptionem asserendam referuntur. Cum autem nihil Nobis gratius, nihil iucundius, nihilque optabilius, quam ut erga augustam Virginem pietas et cultus magis in dies ubique foveatur, atque augeatur, tum vehementer delectati sumus, quod ecclesiasticis praesertim viris opus idem uberem materiam praebere potest ad scite ornateque de ipsa beatissima Virgine loquendum, eiusque praerogativas, et laudes enarrandas. Itaque dum tertium expectamus volumen, quod pari sententiarum vi, et verborum splendore nitere plane non dubitamus, Tibi ex animo vehementer gratulamur, Dilecte Fili, quod omnes ingenii Tui vires in Deiparae Virginis gloria procuranda impendere tantopere sis gloriatus. Te autem etiam atque etiam hortamur, ut maiori usque alacritate omne tuum studium ponere pergas in illis scribendis et vulgandis operibus, quae catholicae praesertim rei magno usui et ornamento esse possint. Denique praecipuae paternae Nostrae in Te caritatis testem, omniumque caelestium munerum auspicem accipe Apostolicam Benedictionem, quae intimo cordis affectu Tibi ipsi, Dilecte Fili, Religiose Vir, peramanter impertimur.

Datum Romae apud Sanctum Petrum die 14 Decembris Anno MDCCCLIV Pontificatus Nostri Anno Nono.

PIUS PP. IX.

LETTER OF PIUS IX TO FATHER PERRONE ON HIS WORK

De Immaculate B. V. Mariae Conceptu

Beatissimi Patris Nostri Pii PP. IX ad Religiosum Virum Joannem Perrone Presbyterum S.J. datum.

Dilecto Filio Religioso Viro Joanni Perrone Presbytero S.J. Doctori Theol. in Col. Rom. Pius PP. IX.

Dilecte Fili Religiose Vir, Salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem.

Nihil certe Nobis gratius, nihil optabilius, quam ut debitus erga Sanctissimam Dei Genitricem omniumque nostrum amantissimam Matrem immaculatam Virginem Mariam cultus, pietas et observantia magis in dies ubique augeatur, Eiusque laudum praeconia ab omnibus rite celebrentur. Ex quo profecto intelligis, Dilecti Fili, quanta animi Nostri voluptate acceperimus *Disquisitionem Theologicam de Immaculato B. V. Mariae Conceptu* a Te latine exaratam, ac nuper Romanis typis in lucem editam, Nobisque inscriptam. Equidem ubi primum gravissimae atque multiplices supremi Nostri Pontificatus curae et occupationes, quibus continenter distinemur, aliquid vacui temporis Nobis concesserint, haud omittemus Disquisitionem ipsam perlibenter degustare. Etenim minime ignoramus, qua religione et pietate polleas, atque ex aliis tuis operibus jam vulgatis probe noscimus, quibus egregiis ingenii dotibus et qua eruditione ac theologicarum praesertim disciplinarum doctrina et laude praestes. Quod quidem vel maxime decet illius inclytae Societatis Alumnum, quae tot viros vitae integritate, sanctitatis gloria, Catholicae Religionis zelo, omnigena sapientia insignes ac de Christiana et civili republica praeclare meritos habuisse laetatur. Dum autem Tibi, dilecti Fili, debitas pro

dono agimus gratias, Te etiam atque etiam hortamur, ut majori usque alacritate tuas curas cogitationesque in eis potissimum conficiendis operibus impendere pergas, quae rei tum sacre, tum litterariae usui et ornamento esse possint. Denique praecipue Nostrae in Te benevolentiae pignus Apostolicam Benedictionem ex intimo corde depromptam et cum omnis verae felicitatis voto conjunctam Tibi ipsi, Dilecte Fili Religiose Vir, amanter impertimur.

Datum Romae apud S. Mariam Majorem die 25. Octobris anno 1847. Pontificatus Nostri Anno Secundo. Pius PP. IX.

(*Pareri,* Part III, Volume VI, pages 315-316.)

CARDINAL PIETRO GASPARRI

Papal Secretary of State—Original photograph from the Vatican

SEGRETERIA DI STATO
DI SUA SANTITÀ

DAL VATICANO, September 25, 1928.

N° 71445.
DA CITARSI NELLA RISPOSTA

Dear Doctor Mc Kenna,

I have the pleasure of informing you that His Holiness has very greatly appreciated your kind thought in offering him the two volumes of "The National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception" series which you and Doctor Kennedy have with so much zeal compiled and written and edited.

His Holiness expresses his thanks to you for this testimony of your filial devotion and from his heart bestows on you a pledge of heavenly favors, the Apostolic Benediction.

With an expression of my own esteem and with most cordial best wishes, I am

Very sincerely yours in Christ

A. Card. Gasparri

Rev.
Prof. Doctor BERNARD Mc KENNA
Catholic University
WASHINGTON, D.C.

CHAPTER XXIV

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POPE OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

CHAPTER XXV

THE CARDINALS OF THE HOLY ROMAN CHURCH,

Patriarchs, Archbishops, and Bishops,

Who were in the Vatican Basilica at the Solemn Mass of the 8th of December, 1854,

When the Supreme Pontiff, Pius IX,

Pronounced the Dogmatic Definition of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary, Mother of God

The order of dignity amongst the prelates, assembled on this solemn occasion was regulated, as is the rule, by priority of consecration, or, in case of Archbishops, of their translation to the Metropolitan See.

THE MOST EMINENT AND MOST REVEREND LORDS CARDINALS

Of the Order of Bishops

Vincent Macchi, Dean of the Sacred College, Bishop of Ostia and Velletri.
Marius Mattei, Bishop of Porto and S. Rufina.
Constantine Patrizi, Bishop of Albano.
Aloysius Amat, Bishop of Palestrina.
Gabriel Ferretti, Bishop of Sabina.
Anthony Mary Cagiano de Azevedo, Bishop of Frascati.

Of the Order of Priests

James Philip Fransoni, of the Title of S. Mary *in Aracoeli*
Benedict Barberini, of the Title of S. Mary *Transtiberim*

Hugh Peter Spinola, of the Title of SS. Sylvester and Martin *ad Montes.*

Adrian Fieschi, of the Title of S. Mary *de Victoria.*

Ambrose Bianchi, of the Title of SS. Andrew and Gregory *in Monte Cœlio.*

Gabriel Della Genga Sermattei, of the Title of S. Jerome *Illyricorum.*

Clarissimus Falconieri Mellini, of the Title of S. Marcellus, Archbishop of Ravenna.

Anthony Tosti, of the Title of S. Peter *in Janiculo.*

Philip de Angelis, of the Title of S. Bernard *ad Thermas,* Archbishop of Fermo.

Engelbert Sterckx, of the Title of S. Bartholomew *in Insula,* Archbishop of Mechlin.

Jaspar Bernard Piannetti, of the Title of S. Xystus, Bishop of Viterbo.

Aloysius Vannicelli Casoni, of the Title of S. Praxedes, Archbishop of Ferrara.

Lewis Altieri, of the Title of S. Mary *in Porticu.*

Lewis James Maurice DeBonald, of the Title of the Most Holy Trinity *in Monte Pincio,* Archbishop of Lyons.

Frederick Joseph Schwarzenberg, of the Title of S. Augustine, Archbishop of Prague.

Cosimus Corsi, of the Title of SS. John and Paul, Archbishop of Pisa.

Fabius Mary Asquini, of the Title of S. Stephen *in Monte Cœlio.*

Nicholas Clarelli Parracciani, of the Title of S. Peter *ad Vincula.*

Dominick Caraffa de Traetto, of the Title of S. Mary *Angelorum,* Archbishop of Benevento.

James Piccolomini, of the Title of S. Mark.

William Henry de Carvalho, Patriarch of Lisbon.

Xystus Riario Sforza, of the Title of S. Sabina, Archbishop of Naples.
Cajetan Baluffi, of the Title of SS. Peter and Marcellinus, Bishop of Imola.
John Joseph Bonnel-y-Orbe, Archbishop of Toledo.
James Mary Adrian Caesarius Mathieu, of the Title of S. Sylvester *in Capite,* Archbishop of Besançon.
Thomas Gousset, of the Title of S. Callistus, Archbishop of Rheims.
Nicholas Wiseman, of the Title of S. Pudentiana, Archbishop of Westminster.
Joseph Cosenza, of the Title of S. Mary *in Transpontina,* Archbishop of Capua.
Joseph Pecci, of the Title of S. Balbina, Bishop of Gubbio.
Dominick Lucciardi, of the Title of S. Clement, Bishop of Sinigaglia.
Jerome D'Andrea, of the Title of S. Agnes *extra muros.*
Charles Aloysius Morichini, of the Title of S. Onophrius, Bishop of Jesi.
John Brunelli, of the Title of S. Cecilia *Transtiberim.*
John Scitowski, of the Title of the Most Holy Cross *in Hierusalem,* Archbishop of Strigonia.
Justus Recanati, of the Title of SS. XII, Apostles.
Joachim Pecci, of the Title of S. Chrysogonus, Bishop of Perugia.

Of the Order of Deacons

Thomas Riario Sforza, of S. Mary *in Via Lata.*
Lewis Gazzoli, of S. Eustachius.
Joseph Ugolini, of S. Adrian *ad Forum Romanum.*
John Serafini, of S. Mary *in Cosmedin.*
Peter Marini, of S. Nicholas *in Carcere.*
Joseph Bofondi, of S. Cæsareus.
James Antonelli, of S. Agatha *ad Suburram.*
Robert Roberti, of S. Mary *in Domnica.*

Dominick Savelli, of S. Mary *in Aquiro.*
Prosper Caterini, of S. Mary *de Scala.*
Vincent Santucci, of S. Mary *ad Martyres.*

Archbishops

Mary Aloysius Cardelli, *Acrida,* 26th December, 1828.
Ferdinand Minucci, *Florence,* 28th January, 1829.
Aloysius Fransoni, *Turin,* 24th February, 1832.
Joseph Mary Vespignani, *formerly Tiana, now Bishop of Orvieto,* 23rd June, 1834.
John MacHale, *Tuam,* 8th August, 1834.
Stephen Missir, *Irenopolis,* 12th March, 1837.
Lewis of S. Teresa Martini, *Cyrra,* 1st June, 1839.
Francis Pichi, *Eliopolis,* 17th December, 1840.
John Polding, *Sydney,* 15th February, 1842.
Emmanuel Marongiu, *Cagliari,* 23rd May, 1842.
Francis Cometti, *Nicomedia,* 22nd January, 1844.
Anthony Mary Benedict Antonucci, *formerly Tarsus, now Bishop of Ancona,* 25th July, 1844.
Francis Gentilini, *Tiana,* 20th January, 1845.
Leo Przytuski, *Gnesen and Posen,* 20th January, 1845.
Michael Manzo, *Chieti,* 21st April, 1845.
Alexander Macioti, *Colossa,* 22nd September, 1845.
Alexander of Sanmarzano Asinari, *Ephesus,* 19th January, 1846.
Alexander Angeloni, *Urbino,* 16th April, 1846.
Charles Reisach, *Munich,* 2nd October, 1846.
Bartholomew Romilli, *Milan,* 14th January, 1847.
Felicissimus Salvini, *Camerino,* 12th April, 1847.
Peter Mary Joseph Darcimoles, *Aix,* 12th April, 1847.
Edward Hurmuz, *Sirace,* 13th September, 1847.
Andrew Charvaz, *Genoa,* 3rd July, 1848.
Mary Dominick Augustus Sibour, *Paris,* 11th September, 1848.

Joseph Mary Matthias Debelay, *Avignon,* 11th December, 1848.
Julius Arrigoni, *Lucca,* 5th November, 1849.
Paul Cullen, *Dublin,* 8th January, 1850.
John Hughes, *New York,* 19th July, 1850.
Anthony Blanc, *New Orleans,* 19th July 1850.
Anthony Ligi-Bussi, *Iconium,* 17th February, 1851.
Stephen Scerra, *Ancyra,* 10th April, 1851.
Francis Kendrick, *Baltimore,* 29th August, 1851.
Michael Garcia, *Compostella,* 5th September, 1851.
Cajetan Bedini, *Thebes,* 15th March, 1852.
William Walsh, *Halifax,* 4th May, 1852.
Joseph Dixon, *Armagh,* 4th October, 1852.
Francis Cuculla, *Naxos,* 14th January, 1853.
John Zuiysen, *Utrecht,* 4th March, 1853.
John Baptist Arnaldi, *Spoleto,* 7th March, 1853.
Joseph Otmar Rauscher, *Vienna,* 27th June, 1853.
Vincent Tagliatela, *Manfredonia,* 23rd June, 1854.

Bishops

Nicholas Mary Laudisio, *Policastro,* 4th June, 1819.
John Benedict Folicaldi, *Faenza,* 2nd July, 1832.
Francis Barzellotti, *Soana and Pitigliano,* 2nd July, 1832.
Eugene Mazenod, *Marseilles,* 14th October, 1832.
John Briggs, *Beverley,* 22nd January, 1833.
John Baptist Bouvier, *Le Mans,* 20th January, 1834.
Peter Chrysologus Basetti, *Borgo S. Donnino,* 19th November, 1834.
William Aretini Sillani, formerly *Terracina,* 6th April, 1835.
Gaspar Joseph Labis, *Tournay,* 6th April, 1835.
Nicholas Joseph Dehessele, *Namur,* 1st February, 1836.
Ignatius Bourget, *Montreal,* 10th March, 1837.
Francis Bruni, *Ugento,* 19th March, 1837.
Cajetan Benaglia, *Lodi,* 2nd October, 1837.

Joseph Mary Castellani, *Porphyris,* 8th July, 1839.
Peter Raffaeli, *Reggio of Modena,* 23rd December, 1839.
Lewis Besi, *Canope,* 10th June, 1840.
William Wareing, *Northampton,* 11th March, 1840.
Joseph Brown, *Newport,* 11th July, 1840.
Peter Mary Chatrousse, *Valence,* 13th July, 1840.
George Anthony Stahl, *Wurtzburg,* 13th July, 1840.
Charles Gigli, *Tivoli,* 14th December, 1840.
James Foretti, *Chioggia,* 24th January, 1841.
Frances Mary Vibert, *St. John de Maurienne,* 1st March, 1841.
John Amatus De Vesins, *Agen,* 21st July, 1842.
Joseph Mary Galligari, *Narni,* 22nd July, 1842.
Boniface Cajani, *Cagli and Pergola,* 22nd July, 1842.
Ferdinand Girardi, *Sessa,* 22nd July, 1842.
Eleonorus Aronne, *Montalto,* 22nd July, 1842.
Aloysius Rendu, *Annecy,* 27th January, 1843.
Vincent Tizzani, formerly *Terni,* 3rd April, 1843.
Charles MacNally, *Clogher,* 21st July, 1843.
Michael O'Connor, *Pittsburgh,* 11th August, 1843.
Aloysius Landi-Vittori, *Assisium,* 22nd January, 1844.
John Doney, *Montauban,* 22nd January, 1844.
John Baptist Rosani, *Eritréa,* 22nd January, 1844.
Peter Joseph De Preux, *Sion,* 25th January, 1844.
Bonaventure Atanasio, *Lipari,* 22nd July, 1844.
Bernard Mary Tirabassi, *Ferentino,* 20th January, 1845.
Cajetan Carletti, *Rieti,* 21st April, 1845.
John Onesimus Luquet, *Hesebon,* 20th August, 1845.
Urban Bagdanovick, *Europum,* 30th September, 1845.
John Baptist Pelley, *Acquapendente,* 24th November, 1845.
Stephen Marilley, *Lausanne and Geneva,* 19th January, 1846.
Peter Paul Trucchi, *Anagni,* 21st September, 1846.
Felix Cantimorri, *Parma,* 21st December, 1846.

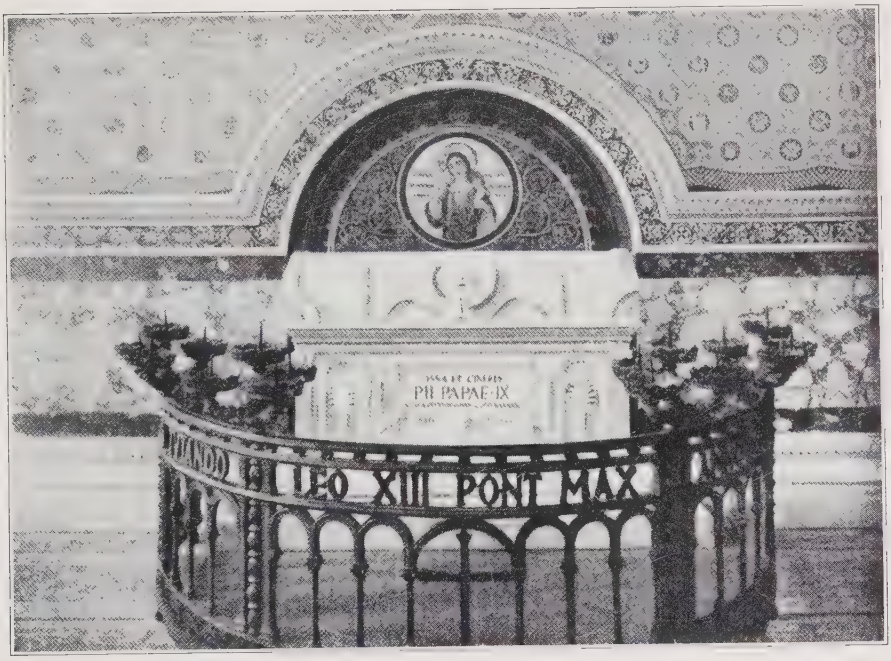
Joseph Augustus Victorinus de Morlhon, *Le Puy,* 12th April, 1847.
John Timon, *Buffalo,* 23rd April, 1847.
Joseph Novella, *Patera,* 22nd May, 1847.
Peter Mary Vrancken, *Colophon,* 4th June, 1847.
Aloysius Ricci, *Segni,* 14th June, 1847.
Joseph Mary Benedict Serra, *Daulia,* 25th June, 1847.
John Derry, *Clonfert,* 9th July, 1847.
Camillus Bisleti, *Corneto and Civita Vecchia,* 4th October, 1847.
Amadeus Zangari, *Macerata,* 14th April, 1848.
Francis Agostini, *Nocera,* 14th April, 1848.
Francis Gandolfi, *Antipatris,* 14th April, 1848.
John Baptist Malou, *Bruges,* 11th December, 1848.
Lewis Anthony de Salinis, *Amiens,* 2nd April, 1849.
John Mary Acciardi, *Anglona and Tursi,* 20th April, 1849.
Joseph Singlau, *Borgo S. Sepolcro,* 20th April, 1849.
Timothy Murphy, Cloyne, 3rd August, 1849.
Anthony Felix Philibert Dupanloup, *Orleans,* 28th September, 1849.
Paul Bertolozzi, *Montalcino,* 7th January, 1850.
John Van-Genk, *Adra,* 22nd March, 1850.
Raphael Bachetoni, *Norcia,* 20th May, 1850.
William Ketteler, *Mayence,* 20th May, 1850.
Jerome Verzeri, *Brescia,* 30th September, 1850.
Julian Florian Deprez, *St. Denis,* 3rd October, 1850.
Salvator Valentini, *Amelia,* 17th February, 1851.
Raphael Bocci, *Alatri,* 17th February, 1851.
Raphael Ferringno, *Bova,* 17th February, 1851.
Lewis Theophilus Pallu du Parc, *Blois,* 17th February, 1851.
Thomas Grant, *Southwark,* 27th June, 1851.
Mathias Augustine Mengacci, *Civita Castellana, Orte, and Gallese,* 5th September, 1851.
Cajetan Brinciotti, *Bagnorea,* 5th September, 1851.

John Neuman, *Philadelphia,* 13th February, 1852.
John Baptist Paul Mary Lyònnet, *St. Flour,* 15th March, 1852.
Eugene Regnault, *Chartres,* 15th March, 1852.
Michael Caputo, *Oppido,* 27th September, 1852.
Ferdinand De La Puente, *Salamanca,* 27th September, 1852.
Joseph Cardoni, *Caristo,* 27th September, 1852.
Jesuald Vitali, *Agathopolis,* 27th September, 1852.
Marianus Falcinelli, *Forli,* 7th March, 1853.
Aloysius Filippi, *Aquila,* 7th March, 1853.
James Mary Ginoulhac, *Grenoble,* 7th March, 1853.
Vitalis Honoré Tirmarche, *Adras,* 3rd June, 1853.
Richard Roskell, *Nottingham,* 29th July, 1853.
Alexander Goss, *Gerra,* 29th July, 1853.
Emygdius Foschini, *Città della Pieve,* 12th September, 1853.
Henry Förster, *Wratislaw,* 12th September, 1853.
Nicholas Bedini, *Terracina, Piperno, and Sezze,* 19th December, 1853.
Francis Xavier d'Apuzzo, Anastasiopolis, 12th January, 1854.
Benedict Riccabona, *Verona,* 7th April, 1854.
Aloysius Jona, *Montefiascone,* 23rd June, 1854.
Aloysius Zannini, *Veroli,* 30th November, 1854.
Michael Adinolfi, *Nusco,* 30th November, 1854.
Francis Mary Alli-Maccarani, *S. Miniato,* 30th November, 1854.
Felician Barbacci, *Cortona,* 30th November, 1854.

Elect

Joseph Andrew Bizzari, *Archbishop of Philippi,* 30th November, 1854.
Fidelis Bufarini, *Bishop of Ripatransone,* 30th November, 1854.

Peter Villanova-Castellacci, *Bishop of Lystra,* 30th November, 1854.



TOMB OF PIUS IX

PART IV

The Reigning Pope
Feb. 11, 1929

FOREWORD TO PART IV

(Appendices)

The addition of Cardinal Newman's article on the distinction between *dogma and devotion;* the excerpts from the treatise of Blessed Grignon de Montfort on *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin,* and the confirmation of the devotion itself through Lourdes by the Popes from Pius IX to Pius XI are contained in the following pages.

Pius XI himself in his great devotion to the Immaculate Conception has not only confirmed the work of his predecessors in regard to the propagation of devotion to the Blessed Virgin in America, but has, as will be seen in the letter of Msgr. Borgongini-Duca and the editorial of Msgr. Pucci, done everything to make his gift to the National Shrine so beautiful and artistic that it will greatly increase devotion to the Blessed Virgin in this historic center of a country dedicated to Mary Immaculate.

The academic work sketched in the last appendix shows the efforts to combine deeper knowledge with true devotion to the Immaculate Conception.

National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

APPENDIX A

DOGMA AND DEVOTION

The Belief of Catholics concerning the blessed Virgin, as Distinct from Their Devotion to the Immaculate Conception

By Cardinal Newman*

I begin by making a distinction which will go far to remove good part of the difficulty of my undertaking, as it presents itself to ordinary inquirers,—the distinction between faith and devotion. I fully grant that *devotion* towards the blessed Virgin has increased among Catholics with the progress of centuries; I do not allow that the *doctrine* concerning her has undergone a growth, for I believe that it has been in substance one and the same from the beginning.

By "faith" I mean the Creed and assent to the Creed; by "devotion" I mean such religious honours as belong to the objects of our faith and the payment of those honours. Faith and devotion are as distinct in fact, as they are in idea. We cannot, indeed, be devout without faith, but we may believe without feeling devotion. Of this phenomenon every one has experience both in himself and in others; and we bear witness to it as often as we speak of realizing a truth or not realizing it. It may be illustrated, with more or less exactness, by matters which come before us in the world. For instance, a great author, or public man, may be acknowledged as such for a course of years; yet there may be an increase, an ebb and flow, and a fashion, in his popularity. And if he takes a lasting place in the minds of his countrymen, he may gradually grow into it, or suddenly be ransed to it. The idea of Shakespeare as a great poet, has existed from a very early date in public opinion; and there were at least individuals then who understood him as well,

* Newman's answer to Pusey.

and honoured him as much, as the English people can honour him now; yet, I think, there is a national devotion to him in this day such as never has been before. This has happened, because, as education spreads in the country, there are more men able to enter into his poetical genius, and, among these, more capacity again for deeply and critically understanding him; and yet, from the first, he has exerted a great insensible influence over the nation, as is seen in the circumstance that his phrases and sentences, more than can be numbered, have become almost proverbs among us. And so again in philosophy, and in the arts and sciences, great truths and principles have sometimes been known and acknowledged for a course of years; but, whether from feebleness of intellectual power in the recipients, or external circumstances of an accidental kind, they have not been turned to account. Thus the Chinese are said to have known of the properties of the magnet from time immemorial, and to have used it for land expeditions, yet not on the sea. Again, the ancients knew of the principle that water finds its own level, but seem to have made little application of their knowledge. And Aristotle was familiar with the principle of induction; yet it was left for Bacon to develope it into an experimental philosophy. Illustrations such as these, though not altogether apposite, serve to convey that distinction between faith and devotion on which I am insisting. It is like the distinction between objective and subjective truth. The sun in the spring-time will have to shine many days before he is able to melt the frost, open the soil, and bring out the leaves; yet he shines out from the first notwithstanding, though he makes his power felt but gradually. It is one and the same sun, though his influence day by day becomes greater; and so in the Catholic Church it is the one

Virgin Mother, one and the same from first to last, and Catholics may have ever acknowledged her; and yet, in spite of that acknowledgment, their devotion to her may be scanty in one time and place, and overflowing in another.

This distinction is forcibly brought home to a convert, as a peculiarity of the Catholic religion, on his first introduction to its worship. The faith is everywhere one and the same, but a large liberty is accorded to private judgment and inclination as regards matters of devotion. Any large church, with its collections and groups of people, will illustrate this. The fabric itself is dedicated to Almighty God, and that, under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin, or some particular Saint; or again, of some mystery belonging to the Divine Name or the Incarnation, or of some mystery associated with the Blessed Virgin. Perhaps there are seven altars or more in it, and these again have their several Saints. Then there is the Feast proper to this or that day; and during the celebration of Mass, of all the worshippers who crowd around the Priest, each has his own particular devotions, with which he follows the rite. No one interferes with his neighbour; agreeing, as it were, to differ, they pursue independently a common end, and by paths, distinct but converging, present themselves before God. Then there are confraternities attached to the church,—of the Sacred Heart, or of the Precious Blood; associations of prayer for a good death, or for the repose of departed souls, or for the conversion of the heathen; devotions connected with the brown, blue or red scapular; not to speak of the great ordinary Ritual observed through the four seasons, or of the constant Presence of the Blessed Sacrament, or of its ever-recurring rite of Benediction, and its extraordinary forty hours' Exposition. Or, again, look through such

manuals of prayers as the *Raccolta,* and you at once will see both the number and the variety of devotions, which are open to individual Catholics to choose from, according to their religious taste and prospect of personal edification.

Now these diversified modes of honouring God did not come to us in a day, or only from the Apostles; they are the accumulations of centuries; and, as in the course of years some of them spring up, so others decline and die. Some are local, in memory of some particular Saint, who happens to be the Evangelist, or Patron, or pride of the nation, or who lies entombed in the church or in the city where it is found; and these devotions, necessarily, cannot have an earlier date than the Saint's day of death or interment there. The first of these sacred observances, long before such national memories, were the devotions paid to the Apostles, then those which were paid to the Martyrs; yet there were Saints nearer to our Lord than either Martyrs or Apostles; but, as if these sacred persons were immersed and lost in the effulgence of His glory, and because they did not manifest themselves, when in the body, in external works separate from Him, it happened that for a long while they were less dwelt upon. However, in process of time, the Apostles, and then the Martyrs, exerted less influence than before over the popular mind, and the local Saints, new creations of God's power, took their place, or again, the Saints of some religious order here or there established. Then, as comparatively quiet times succeeded, the religious meditations of holy men and their secret intercourse with heaven gradually exerted an influence out of doors, and permeated the Christian populace, by the instrumentality of preaching and by the ceremonial of the Church. *Hence at length those luminous stars rose in the ecclesiastical heavens, which were of more august dignity than any which had preceded them, and were*

late in rising, for the very reason that they were so specially glorious. Those names, I say, which at first sight might have been expected to enter soon into the devotions of the faithful, with better reason might have been looked for at a later date, and actually were late in their coming. St. Joseph furnishes the most striking instance of this remark; here is the clearest of instances of the distinction between doctrine and devotion. Who, from his prerogatives and the testimony on which they come to us, had a greater claim to receive an early recognition among the faithful than he? A Saint of Scripture, the foster-father of our Lord, he was an object of the universal and absolute faith of the Christian world from the first, yet the devotion to him is comparatively of late date. When once it began, men seemed surprised that it had not been thought of before; and now, they hold him next to the Blessed Virgin in their religious affection and veneration.

TRUE DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

By BLESSED GRIGNON DE MONTFORT*

It is by the most holy Virgin Mary that Jesus has come into the world, and it is also by her that He has to reign in the world.

Mary has been singularly hidden during her life. It is on this account that the Holy Ghost and the Church call her *alma Mater—Mother secret and hidden.* Her humility was so profound that she had no propensity on earth more powerful or more unintermitting than that of hiding herself, even from herself, as well as from every other creature, so as to be known to God only. He heard her prayers to Him, when she begged to be hidden, to be humbled, and to be treated as

* Translation from the original French, by Father Faber, D.D. (London, 1897.)

in all respects poor and of no account. He took pleasure in hiding her from all human creatures in her conception, in her birth, in her life, and in her resurrection and assumption. Her parents even did not know her, and the Angels often asked of each other: *Quæ est ista?* Who is that? Because the Most High either hid her from them, or if He revealed anything of her to them, it was nothing compared to what He kept undisclosed.

God the Father consented that she should do no miracle, at least no public one, during her life, although He had given her the power. God the Son consented that she should hardly ever speak, though He had communicated His wisdom to her. God the Holy Ghost, though she was His faithful Spouse, consented that His Apostles and Evangelists should speak but very little of her, and no more than was necessary to make Jesus Christ known.

Mary is the excellent masterpiece of the Most High, of which He has reserved to Himself both the knowledge and the possession. Mary is the admirable Mother of the Son, who took pleasure in humbling and concealing her during her life, in order to favour her humility, calling her by the name of *woman* (*mulier*), as if she was a stranger, although in His heart He esteemed and loved her above all angels and all men. Mary is the sealed fountain and the faithful Spouse of the Holy Ghost, to whom He alone has entrance. Mary is the sanctuary and the repose of the Holy Trinity, where God dwells more magnificently and more divinely than in any other place in the universe, without excepting His dwelling between the Cherubim and Seraphim. Neither is it allowed to any creature, no matter how pure, to enter into that sanctuary without a great and special privilege.

I say with the Saints, The divine Mary is the terrestial Paradise of the New Adam, where He is incarnate by the operation of the Holy Ghost, in order to work there incom-

prehensible marvels. She is the grand and divine World of God, where there are beauties and treasures unspeakable. She is the magnificent of the Most High, where He has hidden, as in her bosom, His only Son, and in Him all that is most excellent and most precious. O, what grand and hidden things that mighty God has wrought in this admirable creature! How has she herself been compelled to say it, in spite of her profound humility: *Fecit mihi magna, qui potens est!*—"He that is mighty hath done great things to me." The world knows them not, because it is at once incapable and unworthy of such knowledge.

The Saints have said admirable things of this Holy City of God; and, as they themselves avow, they have never been more eloquent and more content than when they have spoken of her.

* * * *

This city which men shall find at the end of the world to convert themselves in, and to satisfy the hunger they have for justice, is the most holy Virgin, who is called by the Holy Ghost the City of God.

It is by Mary that the salvation of the world has begun, and it is by Mary that it must be consummated. Mary has hardly appeared at all in the first coming of Jesus Christ, in order that men, as yet but little instructed and enlightened on the Person of her Son, should not remove themselves from Him, in attaching themselves too strongly and too grossly to her. This would have apparently taken place, if she had been known, because of the admirable charms which the Most High had bestowed even upon her exterior. This is so true that St. Denys the Areopagite has informed us in his writing that when he saw our Blessed Lady, he should have taken her for a Divinity, in consequence of her secret charms and incomparable beauty, had not the Faith in which he was well established taught him the contrary. But in the second

coming of Jesus Christ, Mary has to be made known and revealed by the Holy Ghost, in order that by her Jesus Christ may be known, loved, and served. The reasons which moved the Holy Ghost to hide His Spouse during her life, and to reveal her but a very little since the preaching of the Gospel, subsist no longer.

God, then, wishes to reveal and discover Mary, the masterpiece of His hands, in these latter times:

1. Because she hid herself in this world, and put herself lower than the dust by her profound humility, having obtained of God and of His Apostles and Evangelists that she should not be made manifest.

2. Because, being the Masterpiece of the hands of God, as well here below by grace as in heaven by glory, He wishes to be glorified and praised in her by those who are living upon the earth.

3. As she is the aurora which precedes and discovers the Sun of Justice, who is Jesus Christ, she ought to be recognized and perceived, in order that Jesus Christ may be so.

4. Being the way by which Jesus Christ came to us the first time, she will also be the way by which He will come the second time, though not in the same manner.

5. Being the sure means and the straight and immaculate way to go to Jesus Christ, and to find Him perfectly, it is by her that the holy souls, who are to shine forth especially in sanctity, have to find our Lord. He who shall find Mary shall find life; that is, Jesus Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. But no one can find Mary who does not seek her; and no one can seek her who does not know her: for we cannot seek or desire an unknown object. It is necessary, then, for the greater knowledge and glory of the Most Holy Trinity, that Mary should be more known than ever.

6. Mary must shine forth more than ever in mercy, in

might, and in grace, in these latter times: in mercy, to bring back and lovingly receive the poor strayed sinners who shall be converted and shall return to the Catholic Church; in might, against the enemies of God, idolaters, schismatics, Mahometans, Jews, and souls hardened in impiety, who shall rise in terrible revolt against God to seduce all those who shall be contrary to them, and to make them fall by promises and threats; and, finally, she must shine forth in grace, in order to animate and sustain the valiant soldiers and faithful servants of Jesus Christ, who shall do battle for His interests.

* * * *

True devotion to our Lady is *interior;* that is to say, it comes from the spirit and the heart. It flows from the esteem we have of her, the high idea we have formed of her greatness, and the love which we have for her.

It is *tender;* that is to say, full of confidence in her, like a child's confidence in his loving mother. This confidence makes the soul have recourse to her in all its bodily or mental necessities, with much simplicity, trust, and tenderness. It implores the aid of its good Mother, at all times, in all places, and about all things; in its doubts, that it may be enlightened; in its wanderings, that it may be brought into the right path; in its temptations, that it may be supported; in its weaknesses, that it may be strengthened; in its falls, that it may be lifted up; in its discouragements, that it may be cheered; in its scruples, that they may be taken away; in its crosses, toils, and disappointments of life, that it may be consoled under them. In a word, in all its evils of body and mind, the soul's ordinary refuge is in Mary, without fearing to be importunate to her or to displease Jesus Christ.

True devotion to our Lady is *holy;* that is to say, it leads the soul to avoid sin, and to imitate in the Blessed Virgin

particularly her profound humility, her lively faith, her blind obedience, her continual prayer, her universal mortification, her divine purity, her ardent charity, her heroic patience, her angelical sweetness, and her divine wisdom. These are the ten principal virtues of the most Holy Virgin.

True devotion to our Lady is *constant*. It confirms the soul in good, and it does not let it easily abandon its spiritual exercises. It makes it courageous in opposing the world in its fashions and maxims, the flesh in its wearinesses and passions, and the devil in his temptations. So that a person truly devout of our Blessed Lady is neither changeable, irritable, scrupulous, nor timid. It is not that such a person does not fall, or change sometimes in the sensible feeling of devotion, or in the amount of devotion itself. But when he falls, he rises again by stretching out his hand to his good Mother. If he loses the taste and relish of devotion, he does not disturb himself because of that; for the just and faithful client of Mary lives on the faith of Jesus and Mary, and not on sentiments and sensibilities.

Lastly, true devotion to our Blessed Lady is *disinterested;* that is to say, it inspires the soul not to seek itself but God only, and God in His holy Mother. A true client of Mary does not serve that august Queen from a spirit of lucre and interest, nor for its own good, whether temporal, corporal, or spiritual; but exclusively because she merits to be served, and God alone in her. He does not love Mary precisely because she does him good, or because he hopes in her; but because she is so worthy of love. It is on this account that he loves and serves her as faithfully in his disgusts and drynesses, as in his sweetnesses and sensible fervours. He loves her as much on Calvary, as at the marriage of Cana. O, how such a client of our Blessed Lady, who has no self-seeking in his service of her, is agreeable and precious in the eyes of God and of His holy Mother! But in these days

how rare is such a sight! It is that it may be less rare that I have taken my pen to put on paper what I have taught, in public and in private, during my missions for many years.

LOURDES AND THE POPES*

Their devotion to the Immaculate Conception

The first document that we find is a brief of praise and commendation addressed to the historian of Lourdes, Mr. Henri Lasserre, dated December 4, 1869. In this, Pius IX declares the "the apparition of the Immaculate Conception in the Grotto of Lourdes is a fact of brilliant truth." In 1874 he elevated the chapel of Lourdes to the rank of Minor Basilica, and offered his portrait in mosaic as a decoration for its facade. Two years after, in 1876, he delegated Cardinal Guibert, Archbishop of Paris, to consecrate it in his name, and the same year he sent Bishop Meglia under the title of Apostolic Nuncio to crown the statue of the glorious Virgin. The following year he presented to the Immaculate Mary, Our Lady of Lourdes, the golden rose which is blessed each year by the Pope (this blessing takes place on the fourth Sunday of Lent, before Mass), and offered to the queens and princesses of the earth who are worthy of this favor.

In the Vatican there are abundant souvenirs of Lourdes. In the Pope's study can be seen the statue of the Immaculate; another serves as decoration for the magnificent hall of the Immaculate Conception; and, in his private oratory is found a rich wainscotted enamel representing the apparition of March twenty-fifth,—a gift of Bishop Langenieux, then Bishop of Tarbes. And again in his garden,

* Taken from "The Wonders of Massabielle at Lourdes," by Rev. S. Pruvost, translated from the French by Rev. Joseph A. Fredette. Illustrated and published by The Lourdes Company, Boston, Mass., 1925.

the Pope possesses a perfect facsimile of the celebrated Grotto; and on his daily promenades he often stops and offers up a "Hail Mary" to the Virgin. There also is located a fountain filled with the water of Lourdes; at times the Pope has some of this water carried to the sick, and he uses it himself to soothe his own infirmities.

Leo XIII inherited this devotion of Pius IX and proved it time and again. It is in his name that the corner stone of the Church of the Rosary was laid in 1883 by Cardinal Desprez, Archbishop of Toulouse; that this sanctuary was blessed in 1889 by Cardinal Richard, Archbishop of Paris, appointed for the occasion Legate of the Pope; and finally, that it was consecrated in 1901, by Cardinal Langenieux, Archbishop of Reims, also vested with the title and insignia of Apostolic Delegate. It is also Leo XIII who approved in 1890 both the Office and the Mass of the Apparition of Lourdes and which his successor, Pius X, proclaimed obligatory for the entire world (November 13, 1907).

Pius X, in imitation of his predecessors, developed an intense devotion to our Lady of Lourdes. He accepted with ineffable joy an offer to replace in the Vatican gardens, by a monumental Grotto surmounted by a facsimile of the basilica,—the modest Grotto already existing, and when the work was completed he himself presided at its solemn dedication, March 28, 1905, in the presence of the Pontifical Court and a vast concourse of people. This sanctuary was also for our saintly Pope the object of many a promenade, or rather of many a pious pilgrimage. Unable to come to Lourdes personally, he was represented at the jubilee celebration, in 1908, by a legate. To Cardinal Lecot, Archbishop of Bordeaux, was confided the mission of inaugurating the solemnities in his name on the eleventh day of February, 1908,—the fiftieth anniversary of the first apparition.

Amongst other spiritual favors let us mention the famous

indulgence of three hundred days applicable to the souls of purgatory, which all the faithful can gain each time that they pronounce the following invocation: "Our Lady of Lourdes, pray for us."

This special devotion of the Popes for Our Lady of Lourdes has, without a doubt, a distinct cause which is added to this sentiment so universal in the Church, called *the Devotion to the Blessed Virgin,*—a sentiment particularly strong and profound in the city of the Popes. And what is this cause? It is that the Blessed Virgin came to Lourdes to convey to the world God's answer to the most important religious act of modern times, that is,—to the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, solemnly defined at Rome, December 8, 1854, by Pope Pius IX.

REV. DR. BERNARD A. McKENNA

APPENDIX B

THE VATICAN MOSAIC OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Letter to Rev. Dr. Bernard A. McKenna

Rome, November 21, 1923.

Very dear friend:

I am glad to tell you that good progress is being made on the mosaic promised by the Holy Father to the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, at Washington.

The Holy Father has personally selected the Immaculate Conception of Murillo in the Prado Gallery at Madrid.

There is in the same gallery another Murillo with a greater number of angels, but the painting selected by the Holy Father is the best, both for the attitude of the Blessed Virgin and the expression of her countenance. You will agree with me when you see the photograph that I am sending you under separate cover.

In the audience granted by the Holy Father on October 16th, to the Director of the Vatican Mosaic Works, he was commissioned to begin at once on the large Mosaic for the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

The Murillo masterpiece will first be designed after the best copies in Italian galleries. The Director of the Mosaic Works will then go to Madrid and compare his sketch with the Murillo original in the Prado Gallery. On his return, the Roman artists will begin the reproduction in Mosaic of the great painting.

MONSIGNOR BORGONGINI-DUCA,
Secretary—Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs.

GIFT TO AMERICA FROM PIUS THE ELEVENTH*

The Vatican mosaic manufactury is working on the large picture destined by the Holy Father for the new shrine of the Catholic University of America at Washington.

It is the most important work that the famous manufactury has undertaken since the making of the large picture of Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, which Pope Benedict the Fifteenth had executed for the Vatican Basilica.

It was Benedict the Fifteenth who promised to the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on the grounds of the Catholic University, in Washington, the picture for the high altar. His Holiness said the picture would prove worthy of the artistic tradition of the Vatican. He wished that it should be in mosaic, and that it be made in the Vatican manufactury, famous throughout the world for its very beautiful productions, since all the mosaics that adorn the Basilica of Saint Peter come from it.

The subject of the picture was to be the Immaculate Conception, reproduced from one of the paintings by the famous Murillo.

But shortly after this generous pledge, which had been at once communicated to the Apostolic Delegation at Washington and to the rector and committee of bishops protectors of the University, Pope Benedict died, and for some time the plans for the picture were suspended.

However, when the new Pope Pius the Eleventh was informed about the promise of his predecessor, he hastened to confirm it and make it his own.

At the beginning of 1924, His Holiness sent for the artist, Count Muccioli, director of the mosaic manufactury, and spoke to him about the work that was to be done.

* Monsignor Enrico Pucci, Vatican Correspondent.

The count, a member of a noble Roman family, is well known for pictures of great value, two of which are conserved in the Vatican Museum and in the Lateran Museum.

During the reign of Benedict the Fifteenth he made a gift to the Pope of a portrait of His Holiness, a striking likeness, presented in the name of the Order of Malta, which the Pope so much appreciated that he wished it to be always near him in the inner rooms of his apartments, in the Sala del Tronetto, where it still hangs.

A short time later, Count Muccioli received from the Pope the order to make the large picture of the Sacred Heart and Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, to be reproduced in mosaics in the Vatican Basilica, at the altar which the Pontiff intended to dedicate to this saint immediately after her canonization. The artist executed the charge entrusted to him with great success.

In the spring of 1924 His Holiness, Pius the Eleventh, had more than one conversation with this illustrious artist about the choice of the subject for the Shrine mosaic and all the particulars pertaining to the composition.

Count Muccioli took the Pope photographs of all the pictures of Murillo which depict the Immaculate Conception, a subject which that great artist painted many times, always with magnificent splendor of art.

After a close examination, the Holy Father chose for the reproduction one of the pictures which is conserved in the Prado Museum at Madrid, and which best seemed adapted to being treated in mosaic. He gave orders to the artist to go at once to Madrid to make immediately a copy from the original, from which copy the mosaic would have to be made.

Count Muccioli departed, furnished with a diplomatic passport, and he was received by the Director of the Prado Museum, with all the attention due to so worthy an artist and so important an aim that with which he came. He stayed

about two months in the Spanish capital and returned with a faithful copy of the original Murillo. From this he traced a little picture as an interpretation of the picture for the mosaic, since it was necessary to revive the colors of the original which are fairly yellowed by time.

From this second picture Count Muccioli reproduced one the exact size of the mosaic destined for Washington.

The mosaic for the shrine will have a surface of 2.70 x 1.90 meters, almost double that of the original painting which hangs in the Prado Museum.

The building-up now consists of eight separate pieces which will then be joined together and held in a large iron frame. The mosaic is made on a base of travertine, a white stone characteristic of the Roman province, and with which the greatest monuments of Rome, from the Colosseum to the Vatican Basilica, have been made.

This base has a thickness of two centimeters. Upon this is extended a layer of cement in which are beaten in, the little pieces of enamel in the various grades of color in perfect reproduction of the picture. This second layer, made of cement and enamel, has also a thickness of two centimeters.

All the eight pieces are then joined together on a large sheet of travertine all in one piece, measuring 14 centimeters thick, which forms the support of the whole picture. The iron frame which encloses the whole thing is extremely strong and has a thickness of a centimeter and a half. When the work is finished it will weigh about five tons.

The mounting will take place in Rome and the mosaic will leave the Vatican for Washington ready to be put into its place.

The mosaic is as well solidified as if it were a single block of marble, the work of polishing will begin; that is,

the polishing of the surface in such a way as to render it perfectly smooth and bright. Then another month will be necessary for the sharpening, that is, filling with colored wax the little spaces which remain between the pieces of mosaic. The mosaic will be ready to leave for America in the near future.

Anyone who visits the studio of mosaics, in the place which it now occupies in the Vatican Palaces, can see the workers intent upon their delicate work. They are not simple workmen, but real artists, who must have culture, taste and an uncommon skill.

Here is the marble slab which is to be covered gradually with a thick layer of sticky yellow cement, and there, besides, are the cases of enamels divided and classified according to the innumerable shades of colors.

The artist stands in front of the picture which he is patiently copying inch by inch. He observes each stroke of the brush that he is to reproduce and then chooses with minute care the enamel of the corresponding color.

If the shape does not fit in the place where it is to be put he breaks it with a very sharp little hammer, adjusts it, and then puts it in its place. It is an extremely delicate work because it consists of tiny pieces and finest shades of color which would often appear imperceptible to one who is ignorant in these matters. And thus by degrees, the delicate head of the angel, the likeness of the Blessed Mother, the vivid blue of her mantle, and the luminous expanse of the sky, all grow under the hands of the expert mosaicist, in exact accordance with the picture he is copying.

To have an idea of the delicacy of this work and of the care and patience with which it must be conducted, it is enough to say, according to the calculated size of the surface, that there will be no less than two hundred and fifty thousand pieces of enamel to be put in place.

The existing series of colors is about twenty-five thousand, but the mosaicist often lights upon a certain shade of color which does not exist in the workshops, and he then has to make especially a new mixture of enamel.

In the Vatican Studio of Mosaics there are furnaces for the filed enamel, that is, for the enamel in thinnest strips which is used for the finest and most delicate works. But for the enamels of larger size, for which it is necessary to use furnaces which are always alight, the Vatican artists use the furnaces of factories in Venice which have a production of universal fame.

For the mosaic destined for Washington it is calculated that no fewer than twenty thousand shades of color will be used, no little part of which will be specially fused.

Such is the work which the Catholic University of America will receive into its temple in the place of honor. It will record worthily not only the generosity and benevolence of the Sovereign Pontiff towards the United States of America, and particularly towards that live center of Catholic art and culture which is that same university, but it will be also an eloquent testimony beyond the ocean—the first and only one so far of such great proportions—of a most glorious artistic tradition which has grown in the shadow of the Vatican.

APPENDIX C

THE CHAIR OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Professor and Students

By Rev. Bernard A. McKenna, D.D.

It is the unique distinction of the Catholic University of America to have had the first chair of the Immaculate Conception. The purpose of this chair is to teach the life and example of the Blessed Virgin and to exhibit from Catholic Theology and History her eminent place in the plan of man's Redemption. Its institution was followed by a chair of the same name at Paris and later at Rome.

During the past ten years (1918-1928) this chair has functioned quietly but effectively by sending forth its students to proclaim and promote the great prerogative of the Immaculate Conception.

To the general books in English, which were the first aids to the Mariana students, were added, owing to the zeal, devotion and erudition of the Rector Emeritus of the Catholic University, Bishop Shahan, rare and valuable books in Latin, Italian, Spanish, French and German. These formed the nucleus of the present extremely practical and very valuable collection of books now in our possession, the outcome of constant communications with every part of Europe as well as Asia Minor and Northern Africa.

The invaluable collections of the Pareri and of Bourassé; of encyclopedias in English and French; the wonderful work of Passaglia on the Immaculate Conception; the collection of works on the Blessed Virgin Mary in German; the distinguished works of love of the Spaniards on the Immaculate Conception from the days of John Gonzalez at the Council of Basle till the present days. These and a thou-

sand other works are at hand in our Mariana Library for the students to peruse and study.

Art has been taken up so fully with the Blessed Virgin both in picture and in architecture that a separate department was founded in the Mariana Library. The collection of several thousand photographic reproductions are there in place as well as the subdivisions of Church architecture which refer to Our Blessed Mother. This department has been in constant demand by architects throughout the country and many artists and lovers of art have consulted it.

Within the last three years (1925-1928) all these collections, as well as many oil paintings referring to the Immaculate Conception and the Blessed Virgin and Child and the Popes from Pius IX to Pius XI, now happily reigning, have been arranged round about the Mariana Library.

This library has in this period been placed in a specially arranged suite of rooms, an actual part of the National Shrine Building itself.

This close proximity of the library to the Shrine gives the students an intimate spiritual connection between themselves and the patroness of the National Shrine, Mary Immaculate.

Many of the students who have followed these studies have instituted special courses in their own seminaries and colleges and are in constant touch with our Mariana work.

The lectures began in May, 1918, and were given in the Chapel of Divinity Hall. They treated of Christ and Mary; Mary and the Church; Mary and the World and the Immaculate Conception.

After introductory lectures I was appointed to the Chair of the Immaculate Conception and during the past ten years gave the following lectures:

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

THE CHAIR OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

MARIOLOGY

1919-1920

1. Mary's Immaculate Conception. Sinlessness. Perpetual Virginity.

2. Mary's Bodily Assumption into Heaven. Theological and historical development of the doctrine of the Assumption of Mary. (M., Tu., W., Th., 4-5.)

Seminar.—The Cult of the Blessed Virgin; Mary in Art and Mary in Literature. (F., 4-5.)

1920-1921

1. The Origin and Growth of the Cult and Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin.

2. History of the Dogmatic Definition of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin.

3. Enumeration and Examination of the Documents pertaining to the Definition of the Dogma of the Blessed Virgin. (M., Tu., W. Th., 4-5.)

Seminar.—Mary in the Catacombs and in the Fathers of the First Six Centuries. (F., 4-5.)

1921-1922

1. Life of the Blessed Virgin. (a) Symbols and Prophecies of Mary; (b) Mary's Country, Family and Parents; (c) Her Nativity, Childhood and Education; (d) Her Espousal and Marriage to St. Joseph.

2. The Mystery of the Annunciation. Its Historical, Chronological and Theological Setting.

3. Mary's Journey to St. Elizabeth. The Magnificat. Critical examination. (M. Tu., W. Th., 4-5.)

Seminar.—Study of the Marian Calendar from the Syrian, Aethiopic, Greek and Latin Breviaries. (F., 4-5.)

1922-1923

1. The Virgin Birth of Christ and Modern Radical Criticism.

2. The Purification; Its Significance and Appropriateness.

3. The Dogmatic and Historic Exposition of the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception.

4. The Assumption of Mary; The Origin, Antiquity and Dogmatic Significance of this Belief. (M., Tu. W., Th., 8.30 a. m.)

Seminar.—Topics for personal investigation. (F., 4 p. m.)

1923-1924

1. The Rise and Progress of the Cult and the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. (a) The Antiquity and Object of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception among the Greeks; (b) In Spain; (c) In England, Normandy, Flanders and Elsewhere from the Time of St. Anselm till the Council of Basle; (d) From Sixtus IV to the Council of Trent.

2. History of the Dogmatic Definition of the Immaculate Conception.

3. Enumeration of the Documents and Explanation of the Same, relative to the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception. (M., Tu., W., Th., 8.30 a. m.)

Seminar.—Topics for personal investigation.

1924-1925

1. Presentation of Mary. Types and Figures of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Old Testament. Prophecies re-

garding the Blessed Virgin. (M., Tu., W., Th., 8.30-9.30.)

2. Obscurity of Mary in the New Testament.

3. Testimony of Fathers of First Six Centuries concerning Mary.

Seminar.—Examination of Papal Bulls concerning the Cult of Mary. (F., 4-5.)

1925-1926

1. Mary's Secondary Mediatorship.

2. The Cult of the Blessed Virgin.

3. Marian Decrees of the Councils—From the Earliest Christian Times to the Council of the Vatican.

4. Collection of Bulls Given by the Roman Pontiffs concerning the Prerogatives and Cult of the Blessed Virgin. (M., Tu., W. Th., 8.30-9.30 a. m.)

Seminar.—Examination of Papal Bulls concerning the Cult of Mary. (F., 4-5.)

1926-1927

I 1. Proto—Evangelion, Gen. III, 15, "Inimicitias ponam": In relation to the Immaculate Conception.

2. Objections to the Sanctity of B. V. M., as interpreted from the Writings of St. Basil, St. Chrysoston and St. Cyprian.

3. Predestination of Mary.

4. Mary Expected, Foretold and Foreshadowed. (M., Tu., W., Th., 8.30-9.30.)

Seminar.—Study of Documentary Evidence of the First Six Centuries as contained in the Fathers. (F., 4-5.)

1927-1928

1. Cult of the Blessed Virgin Mary—Its various Divisions.

2. Our Lady in the Church.

3. History and Development of Blessed Virgin Mary Sodality.

4. Study of Doctrine of Blessed Virgin Mary from VI to XV Century.

Seminar.—History and Development of Painting of Blessed Virgin Mary in Spain from XIV to XX Century.

1928-1929

a. Introduction. The Divine Maternity and other Prerogatives of the Blessed Virgin. The Rise and Growth of the Cult of the Immaculate Conception. (First half year.)

b. Liturgies Treating of the Blessed Mother from the Earliest Times to the Eleventh Century. Critical Survey of the Fathers of the First Six Centuries in their Treatment of the Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. (M., Tu., W., Th., 8-9.)

* * * * * *

Growing out of the study and teaching of the doctrine and devotion to the Blessed Virgin came the literary contributions to the little paper entitled "Salve Regina." These, though simple in themselves, did much to promote devotion to Our Blessed Lady and were instrumental in bringing to the public the two volumes, *History of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception* and *Mary Book,* both of which have been well received. More than twenty-five million (25,000,000) copies of the *Salve Regina* were distributed in the last twelve years, each one having reference to Our Blessed Mother and particularly to her great prerogative—the Immaculate Conception.

Thus the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, fostered by the Popes, Bishops, priests and people, has been the instrument in the hands of Divine Providence to increase devotion to Mary Immaculate.

DOGMA AND DEVOTION

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